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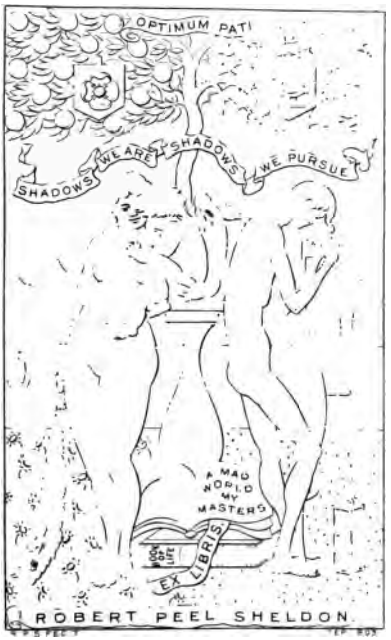
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1859-

WAVERLEY NOVELS

A. Fraser. J. Mitchell.

REDGAUNTLET.

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

VOL. XXXV.

REDGAUNTLET.

'I was induced at last to lend the rod to the sneering
accundrel, to see what he would make of it and he set
only half filled my basket in an hour [illegible]
taught me to kill two trouts with my own hand.

[illegible]

THE

WAVERLEY NOVELS

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. XXXV.

REDGAUNTLET.—I.

EDINBURGH:
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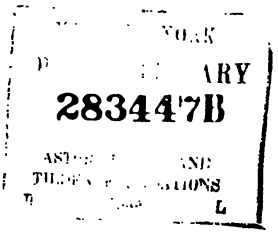
1860.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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Engrabings on Steel.

Subject.	Drawn by	Engraved by	
Evening Meal at the Shepherd's Bush	A. Fraser.	Mitchell.	*Frontispiece*
Benjie and Darsie Latimer	J. Inskipp.	R. Graves.	*Vignette*

Engrabings on Wood.

Subject.	Drawn by	Engraved by	Page
Title of Novel—*Fac-simile of Sir Walter Scott's Handwriting*			17
Old High School of Edinburgh, time of Tale	Dickes	Keck	25
Noble House, Peeblesshire	Paton	Jones	30
High School Wynd, Edinburgh	Dickes	Keck	41
Map of the Solway Firth	Dickes	Palmer	56

44X434

Subject.	Drawn by	Engraved by	Page
Back View of the Earl of Selkirk's House, in Hyndford's Close, High Street, Edinburgh, afterwards occupied by Dr. Rutherford, the Maternal Grandfather of Sir W. Scott .	Douglas . .	Kirchner .	88
Front view of ditto	Douglas . .	Gilks . .	96
Dornock, Dumfriesshire, looking towards the Solway . .	Blacklock .	Landells .	97
Leechman's School, Hamilton's Entry, Bristo Street, Edinburgh, the first School Sir Walter Scott attended . . .	Douglas . .	Andrew .	114
Kittle Nine Steps, Edinburgh Castle Rock, facing Princes Street Gardens	Dickes . .	T. Williams	128
Brown Square, Edinburgh (see page 38)	Douglas . .	Kirchner .	144
The Cowgate, Edinburgh . . .	Dickes . .	Keck . .	159
Mount Sharon, designed after Munches House, Kirkcudbrightshire	Paton . .	Walmsley	176
Redgauntlet Castle, designed after Hoddam Castle, Dumfriesshire, built by John Lord Herries of Herries	Dickes . .	Armstrong	183
First Public Ball-rooms, West Bow, Edinburgh	Skene . .	Gilks . .	200
The Dance at Brokenburn . .	F. Tayler .	Thompson	232
Arms of the City of Edinburgh	Maitland .	Andrew .	257
Back Stairs, leading from the Parliament House, Edinburgh, as seen from the Cowgate . . .	Storer . .	Williams .	265

Subject.	Drawn by	Engraved by	Page
Statue of Duncan Forbes of Culloden, Parliament House, Edinburgh (*Roubiliac*)	Dickes . .	Keck . .	281
Interior of the Parliament House, Edinburgh	Douglas. .	Armstrong	288
Ailsa Craig, off the coast of Ayrshire	Dickes . .	Keck . .	297
Tide Nets on the Solway . . .	Paton . .	Keck . .	304
Cottages on the Solway . . .	Blacklock .	Whimper .	315
St. Bees, Cumberland		Measom .	336
Dacre Castle, Cumberland . .	Dickes . .	Carter . .	352

REDGAUNTLET.

A TALE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Master, go on; and I will follow thee,
To the last gasp, with truth and loyalty.
As You Like it.

INTRODUCTION—(1832).

The Jacobite enthusiasm of the eighteenth century, particularly during the rebellion of 1745, afforded a theme, perhaps the finest that could be selected for fictitious composition, founded upon real or probable incident. This civil war, and its remarkable events, were remembered by the existing generation without any degree of the bitterness of spirit which seldom fails to attend internal dissension. The Highlanders who formed the principal strength of Charles Edward's army, were an ancient and high spirited race, peculiar in their habits of war and of peace, brave to romance, and exhibiting a character turning upon points more adapted to poetry than to the prose of real life. Their Prince, young, valiant, patient of fatigue, and despising danger, heading his army on foot in the most toilsome marches,

and defeating a regular force in three battles, all these were circumstances fascinating to the imagination, and might well be supposed to seduce young and enthusiastic minds to the cause in which they were found united, although wisdom and reason frowned upon the enterprise.

The adventurous Prince, as is well known, proved to be one of those personages who distinguish themselves during some single and extraordinarily brilliant period of their lives, like the course of a shooting star, at which men wonder, as well on account of the briefness, as the brilliancy of its splendour. A long trace of darkness overshadowed the subsequent life of a man, who, in his youth, shewed himself so capable of great undertakings; and, without the painful task of tracing his course further, we may say the latter pursuits and habits of this unhappy Prince, are those painfully evincing a broken heart, which seeks refuge from its own thoughts in sordid enjoyments.

Still, however, it was long ere Charles Edward appeared to be, perhaps it was long ere he altogether became, so much degraded from his original self; as he enjoyed for a time the lustre attending the progress and termination of his enterprise. Those who thought they discerned in his subsequent conduct an insensibility to the distresses of his followers, coupled with that egotistical attention to his own interests, which has been often attributed to the Stuart Family, and which, as the natural effect of the principles of divine right in which they were brought up, were now gener-

ally considered as dissatisfied and splenetic persons, who, displeased with the issue of their adventure, and finding themselves involved in the ruins of a falling cause, indulged themselves in undeserved reproaches against their leader. Indeed, such censures were by no means frequent among those of his followers, who, if what was alleged had been just, had the best right to complain. Far the greater number of those unfortunate gentlemen suffered with the most dignified patience, and were either too proud to take notice of ill treatment on the part of their Prince, or so prudent as to be aware their complaints would meet with little sympathy from the world. It may be added, that the greater part of the banished Jacobites, and those of high rank and consequence, were not much within reach of the influence of the Prince's character and conduct, whether well regulated or otherwise.

In the meantime, that great Jacobite conspiracy, of which the insurrection of 1745-6 was but a small part, precipitated into action on the failure of a far more general scheme, was resumed and again put into motion by the Jacobites of England, whose force had never been broken, as they had prudently avoided bringing it into the field. The surprising effect which had been produced by small means, in 1745-6, animated their hopes for more important successes, when the whole nonjuring interest of Britain, identified as it then was with great part of the landed gentlemen, should come forward to finish what had been gallantly attempted by a few Highland chiefs.

It is probable, indeed, that the Jacobites of the day were incapable of considering that the very small scale on which the effort was made, was in one great measure the cause of its unexpected success. The remarkable speed with which the insurgents marched, the singularly good discipline which they preserved, the union and unanimity which for some time animated their councils, were all in a considerable degree produced by the smallness of their numbers. Notwithstanding the discomfiture of Charles Edward, the nonjurors of the period long continued to nurse unlawful schemes, and to drink treasonable toasts, until age stole upon them. Another generation arose, who did not share the sentiments which they cherished; and at length the sparkles of disaffection, which had long smouldered, but had never been heated enough to burst into actual flame, became entirely extinguished. But in proportion as the political enthusiasm died gradually away among men of ordinary temperament, it influenced those of warm imaginations and weak understandings, and hence wild schemes were formed, as desperate as they were adventurous.

Thus a young Scottishman of rank is said to have stooped so low as to plot the surprisal of St. James's palace, and the assassination of the royal family. While these ill-digested and desperate conspiracies were agitated among the few Jacobites who still adhered with more obstinacy to their purpose, there is no question but that other plots might have been brought to an open explosion, had it not suited the

policy of Sir Robert Walpole, rather to prevent or disable the conspirators in their projects, than to promulgate the tale of danger, which might thus have been believed to be more widely diffused than was really the case.

In one instance alone this very prudential and humane line of conduct was departed from, and the event seemed to confirm the policy of the general course. Doctor Archibald Cameron, brother of the celebrated Donald Cameron of Lochiel, attainted for the rebellion of 1745, was found by a party of soldiers lurking with a comrade in the wilds of Loch Katrine, five or six years after the battle of Culloden, and was there seized. There were circumstances in his case, so far as was made known to the public, which attracted much compassion, and gave to the judicial proceedings against him an appearance of cold-blooded revenge on the part of government; and the following argument of a zealous Jacobite in his favour was received as conclusive by Dr. Johnson, and other persons who might pretend to impartiality. Dr. Cameron had never borne arms, although engaged in the Rebellion, but used his medical skill for the service, indifferently, of the wounded of both parties. His return to Scotland was ascribed exclusively to family affairs. His behaviour at the bar was decent, firm, and respectful. His wife threw herself, on three different occasions, before George II. and the members of his family, was rudely repulsed from their presence, and at length placed, it was said, in the same prison with her husband, and confined with unmanly severity.

Dr. Cameron was finally executed, with all the severities of the law of treason; and his death remains, in popular estimation, a dark blot upon the memory of George II., being almost publicly imputed to a mean and personal hatred of Donald Cameron of Lochiel, the sufferer's heroic brother.

Yet the fact was, that whether the execution of Archibald Cameron was political or otherwise, it might certainly have been justified, had the King's ministers so pleased, upon reasons of a public nature. The unfortunate sufferer had not come to the Highlands solely upon his private affairs, as was the general belief; but it was not judged prudent by the English ministry to let it be generally known that he came to inquire about a considerable sum of money which had been remitted from France to the friends of the exiled family. He had also a commission to hold intercourse with the well known M'Pherson of Cluny, chief of the clan Vourich, whom the Chevalier had left behind at his departure from Scotland in 1746, and who remained during ten years of proscription and danger, skulking from place to place in the Highlands, and maintaining an uninterrupted correspondence between Charles and his friends. That Dr. Cameron should have held a commission to assist this chief in raking together the dispersed embers of disaffection, is in itself sufficiently natural, and, considering his political principles, in no respect dishonourable to his memory. But neither ought it to be imputed to George II., that he suffered the laws to be enforced against a person taken in the

act of breaking them. When he lost his hazardous game, Dr. Cameron only paid the forfeit which he must have calculated upon. The ministers, however, thought it proper to leave Dr. Cameron's new schemes in concealment, lest, by divulging them, they had indicated the channel of communication which, it is now well known, they possessed to all the plots of Charles Edward. But it was equally ill advised and ungenerous to sacrifice the character of the king to the policy of the administration. Both points might have been gained by sparing the life of Dr. Cameron after conviction, and limiting his punishment to perpetual exile.

These repeated and successive Jacobite plots rose and burst like bubbles on a fountain; and one of them, at least, the Chevalier judged of importance enough to induce him to risk himself within the dangerous precincts of the British capital. This appears from Dr. King's Anecdotes of his Own Times.

"September, 1750.—I received a note from my Lady Primrose, who desired to see me immediately. As soon as I waited on her, she led me into her dressing-room, and presented me to ——," [the Chevalier, doubtless.] If I was surprised to find him there, I was still more astonished when he acquainted me with the motives which had induced him to hazard a journey to England at this juncture. The impatience of his friends who were in exile, had formed a scheme which was impracticable; but although it had been as feasible as they had represented it to him, yet no preparation had been made, nor was any thing ready to

carry it into execution. He was soon convinced that he had been deceived; and, therefore, after a stay in London of five days only, he returned to the place from whence he came." Dr. King was in 1750 a keen Jacobite, as may be inferred from the visit made by him to the Prince under such circumstances, and from his being one of that unfortunate person's chosen correspondents. He, as well as other men of sense and observation, began to despair of making their fortune in the party which they had chosen. It was indeed sufficiently dangerous; for, during the short visit just described, one of Dr. King's servants remarked the stranger's likeness to Prince Charles, whom he recognized from the common busts.

The occasion taken for breaking up the Stuart interest, we shall tell in Dr. King's own words:— "When he (Charles Edward) was in Scotland, he had a mistress whose name was Walkinshaw, and whose sister was at that time, and is still, housekeeper at Leicester House. Some years after he was released from his prison, and conducted out of France, he sent for this girl, who soon acquired such a dominion over him, that she was acquainted with all his schemes, and trusted with his most secret correspondence. As soon as this was known in England, all those persons of distinction who were attached to him were greatly alarmed: they imagined that this wench had been placed in his family by the English ministers; and, considering her sister's situation, they seemed to have some ground for their suspicion; wherefore, they des-

patched a gentleman to Paris, where the Prince then was, who had instructions to insist that Mrs. Walkinshaw should be removed to a convent for a certain term; but her gallant absolutely refused to comply with this demand; and although Mr. M'Namara, the gentleman who was sent to him, who has a natural eloquence, and an excellent understanding, urged the most cogent reasons, and used all the arts of persuasion, to induce him to part with his mistress, and even proceeded so far as to assure him, according to his instructions, that an immediate interruption of all correspondence with his most powerful friends in England, and, in short, that the ruin of his interest which was now daily increasing, would be the infallible consequence of his refusal; yet he continued inflexible, and all M'Namara's entreaties and remonstrances were ineffectual. M'Namara staid in Paris some days beyond the time prescribed him, endeavouring to reason the Prince into a better temper; but finding him obstinately persevere in his first answer, he took his leave with concern and indignation, saying, as he passed out, 'What has your family done, sir, thus to draw down the vengeance of Heaven on every branch of it, through so many ages?' It is worthy of remark, that in all the conferences which M'Namara had with the Prince on this occasion, the latter declared that it was not a violent passion, or indeed any particular regard, which attached him to Mrs. Walkinshaw, and that he could see her removed from him without any concern; but he would not receive directions, in respect to his private conduct,

from any man alive. When M'Namara returned to London, and reported the Prince's answer to the gentlemen who had employed him, they were astonished and confounded. However, they soon resolved on the measures which they were to pursue for the future, and determined no longer to serve a man who could not be persuaded to serve himself, and chose rather to endanger the lives of his best and most faithful friends, than part with an harlot, whom as he often declared he neither loved nor esteemed."

From this anecdote, the general truth of which is indubitable, the principal fault of Charles Edward's temper is sufficiently obvious. It was a high sense of his own importance, and an obstinate adherence to what he had once determined on—qualities which, if he had succeeded in his bold attempt, gave the nation little room to hope that he would have been found free from the love of prerogative and desire of arbitrary power, which characterized his unhappy grandfather. He gave a notable instance how far this was the leading feature of his character, when, for no reasonable cause that can be assigned, he placed his own single will in opposition to the necessities of France, which, in order to purchase a peace become necessary to the kingdom, was reduced to gratify Britain by prohibiting the residence of Charles within any part of the French dominions. It was in vain that France endeavoured to lessen the disgrace of this step by making the most flattering offers, in hopes to induce the Prince of himself to anticipate this disagreeable alternative, which, if

seriously enforced, as it was likely to be, he had no means whatever of resisting, by leaving the kingdom as of his own free-will. Inspired, however, by the spirit of hereditary obstinacy, Charles preferred a useless resistance to a dignified submission, and by a series of idle bravadoes, laid the French court under the necessity of arresting their late ally, and sending him to close confinement in the Bastile, from which he was afterwards sent out of the French dominions, much in the manner in which a convict is transported to the place of his destination.

In addition to these repeated instances of a rash and inflexible temper, Dr. King also adds faults alleged to belong to the Prince's character, of a kind less consonant with his noble birth and high pretensions. He is said by this author to have been avaricious, or parsimonious at least, to such a degree of meanness, as to fail, even when he had ample means, in relieving the sufferers who had lost their fortune, and sacrificed all in his ill-fated attempt.* We must receive, however, with some degree of jealousy what is said by Dr. King on this subject, recollecting that he had left at least,

* The reproach is thus expressed by Dr. King, who brings the charge:—"But the most odious part of his character is his love of money, a vice which I do not remember to have been imputed by our historians to any of his ancestors, and is the certain index of a base and little mind. I know it may be urged in his vindication, that a Prince in exile ought to be an economist. And so he ought; but, nevertheless, his purse should be always open as long as there is any thing in it, to relieve the necessities of his friends and adherents. King Charles II. during his banishment, would have shared the last pistole in his pocket with his

if he did not desert, the standard of the unfortunate Prince, and was not therefore a person who was likely to form the fairest estimate of his virtues and faults. We must also remember, that if the exiled Prince gave little, he had but little to give, especially considering how late he nourished the scheme of another expedition to Scotland, for which he was long endeavouring to hoard money.

The case, also, of Charles Edward must be allowed to have been a difficult one. He had to satisfy numerous persons, who, having lost their all in his cause, had, with that all, seen the extinction of hopes which they accounted nearly as good as certainties; some of these were perhaps clamorous in their applications, and certainly ill pleased with their want of success. Other parts of the Chevalier's conduct may have afforded grounds for charging him with coldness to the sufferings of his devoted followers. One of these was a sentiment which has nothing in it that is generous, but it was certainly a principle in which the young Prince was trained, and which may be too probably denominated peculiar to his family, educated in all the high notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. If the unhappy Prince gave implicit faith to the professions of statesmen holding such notions, which is implied by

little family. But I have known this gentleman with two thousand louis-d'ors in his strong-box, pretend he was in great distress, and borrow money from a lady in Paris who was not in affluent circumstances. His most faithful servants, who had closely attended him in all his difficulties, were ill rewarded."—KING'S *Memoirs*.

his whole conduct, it must have led to the natural, though ungracious inference, that the services of a subject could not, to whatever degree of ruin they might bring the individual, create a debt against his sovereign. Such a person could only boast that he had done his duty; nor was he entitled to be a claimant for a greater reward than it was convenient for the Prince to bestow, or to hold his sovereign his debtor for losses which he had sustained through his loyalty. To a certain extent the Jacobite principles inevitably led to this cold and egotistical mode of reasoning on the part of the sovereign; nor, with all our natural pity for the situation of royalty in distress, do we feel entitled to affirm that Charles did not use this opiate to his feelings, on viewing the misery of his followers, while he certainly possessed, though in no great degree, the means of affording them more relief than he practised. His own history, after leaving France, is brief and melancholy. For a time he seems to have held the firm belief that Providence, which had borne him through so many hazards, still reserved him for some distant occasion, in which he should be empowered to vindicate the honours of his birth. But opportunity after opportunity slipt by unimproved, and the death of his father gave him the fatal proof that none of the principal powers of Europe were, after that event, likely to interest themselves in his quarrel. They refused to acknowledge him under the title of the King of England, and, on his part, he declined to be then recognized as the Prince of Wales.

Family discord came to add its sting to those of disappointed ambition; and, though a humiliating circumstance, it is generally acknowledged that Charles Edward, the adventurous, the gallant, and the handsome, the leader of a race of pristine valour, whose romantic qualities may be said to have died along with him, had, in his latter days, yielded to those humiliating habits of intoxication, in which the meanest mortals seek to drown the recollection of their disappointments and miseries. Under such circumstances, the unhappy Prince lost the friendship even of those faithful followers who had most devoted themselves to his misfortunes, and was surrounded, with some honourable exceptions, by men of a lower description, regardless of the character which he was himself no longer able to protect.

It is a fact consistent with the author's knowledge, that persons totally unentitled to, and unfitted for, such a distinction, were presented to the unfortunate Prince in moments unfit for presentation of any kind. Amid these clouds was at length extinguished the torch which once shook itself over Britain with such terrific glare, and at last sunk in its own ashes, scarce remembered and scarce noted.

Meantime, while the life of Charles Edward was gradually wasting in disappointed solitude, the number of those who had shared his misfortunes and dangers had shrunk into a small handful of veterans, the heroes of a tale which had been told. Most Scottish readers who can count the number of sixty years, must recol-

lect many respected acquaintances of their youth, who, as the established phrase gently worded it, had been *out in the Forty-five.* It may be said, that their political principles and plans no longer either gained proselytes or attracted terror,—those who held them had ceased to be the subjects either of fear or opposition. Jacobites were looked upon in society as men who had proved their sincerity by sacrificing their interest to their principles; and in well-regulated companies, it was held a piece of ill-breeding to injure their feelings or ridicule the compromises by which they endeavoured to keep themselves abreast of the current of the day. Such, for example, was the evasion of a gentleman of fortune in Perthshire, who, in having the newspapers read to him, caused the King and Queen to be designated by the initial letters of K. and Q., as if, by naming the full word, he might imply an acquiescence in the usurpation of the family of Hanover. George III., having heard of this gentleman's custom in the above and other particulars, commissioned the member for Perthshire to carry his compliments to the steady Jacobite—"that is," said the excellent old King, "not the compliments of the King of England, but those of the Elector of Hanover, and tell him how much I respect him for the steadiness of his principles."

Those who remember such old men, will probably agree that the progress of time, which has withdrawn all of them from the field, has removed, at the same time, a peculiar and striking feature of ancient manners. Their love of past times, their tales of bloody battles

fought against romantic odds, were all dear to the imagination, and their idolatry of locks of hair, pictures, rings, ribbons, and other memorials of the time in which they still seemed to live, was an interesting enthusiasm; and although their political principles, had they existed in the relation of fathers, might have rendered them dangerous to the existing dynasty, yet, as we now recollect them, there could not be on the earth supposed to exist persons better qualified to sustain the capacity of innocuous and respectable grandsires.

It was while reflecting on these things that the novel of Redgauntlet was undertaken. But various circumstances in the composition induced the author to alter its purport considerably, as it passed through his hands, and to carry the action to that point of time when the Chevalier Charles Edward, though fallen into the sere and yellow leaf, was yet meditating a second attempt, which could scarcely have been more hopeless than his first, although one, to which, as we have seen, the unfortunate Prince, at least as late as seventeen hundred and fifty-three, still looked with hope and expectation.

1*st April* 1832.

LETTER THE FIRST.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Dumfries.

CUR me exanimas querelis tuis?—In plain English, Why do you deafen me with your croaking? The disconsolate tone in which you bade me farewell at Noble-House,* and mounted your miserable hack to return to your law drudgery, still sounds in my ears. It seemed to say, "Happy dog! you can ramble at pleasure over hill and dale, pursue every object of curiosity that presents itself, and relinquish the chase when it loses interest; while I, your senior and your better, must, in this brilliant season, return to my narrow chamber and my musty books."

Such was the import of the reflections with which you saddened our parting bottle of claret, and thus I

* The first stage on the road from Edinburgh to Dumfries *via* Moffat.

must needs interpret the terms of your melancholy adieu.

And why should this be so, Alan? Why the deuce should you not be sitting precisely opposite to me at this moment, in the same comfortable George Inn; thy heels on the fender, and thy juridical brow expanding its plications as a pun rose in your fancy? Above all, why, when I fill this very glass of wine, cannot I push the bottle to you and say, "Fairford, you are chased!" Why, I say, should not all this be, except because Alan Fairford has not the same true sense of friendship as Darsie Latimer, and will not regard our purses as common, as well as our sentiments?

I am alone in the world; my only guardian writes to me of a large fortune, which will be mine when I reach the age of twenty-five complete; my present income is, thou knowest, more than sufficient for all my wants; and yet thou—traitor as thou art to the cause of friendship—dost deprive me of the pleasure of thy society, and submittest, besides, to self-denial on thine own part, rather than my wanderings should cost me a few guineas more! Is this regard for my purse, or for thine own pride? Is it not equally absurd and unreasonable, whichever source it springs from? For myself, I tell thee, I have, and shall have, more than enough for both. This same methodical Samuel Griffiths, of Ironmonger-Lane, Guildhall, London, whose letter arrives as duly as quarter-day, has sent me, as I told thee, double allowance for this my twenty-first birthday, and an assurance, in his brief

fashion, that it will be again doubled for the succeeding years, until I enter into possession of my own property. Still I am to refrain from visiting England until my twenty-fifth year expires; and it is recommended that I shall forbear all inquiries concerning my family, and so forth, for the present.

Were it not that I recollect my poor mother in her deep widow's weeds with a countenance that never smiled but when she looked on me—and then, in such wan and woful sort, as the sun when he glances through an April cloud,—were it not, I say, that her mild and matron-like form and countenance forbid such a suspicion, I might think myself the son of some Indian director, or rich citizen, who had more wealth than grace, and a handful of hypocrisy to boot, and who was breeding up privately, and obscurely enriching, one of whose existence he had some reason to be ashamed. But, as I said before, I think on my mother, and am convinced as much as of the existence of my own soul, that no touch of shame could arise from aught in which she was implicated. Meantime, I am wealthy, and I am alone, and why does my friend scruple to share my wealth?

Are you not my only friend? and have you not acquired a right to share my wealth? Answer me that, Alan Fairford. When I was brought from the solitude of my mother's dwelling into the tumult of the Gaits' Class at the High School—when I was mocked for my English accent—salted with snow as a Southern—rolled in the gutter for a Saxon pock-

pudding,—who, with stout arguments, and stouter blows, stood forth my defender?—why, Alan Fairford. Who beat me soundly when I brought the arrogance of an only son, and of course a spoiled urchin, to the forms of the little republic?—why, Alan. And who taught me to smoke a cobbler, pin a lozen, head a bicker, and hold the bannets?*—Alan, once more. If I became the pride of the Yards, and the dread of the hucksters in the High-School Wynd, it was under thy patronage; and, but for thee, I had been contented with humbly passing through the Cowgate-Port, without climbing over the top of it, and had never seen the *Kittle nine-steps*† nearer than from Bareford's Parks. You taught me to keep my fingers off the weak, and to clench my fist against the strong—to carry no tales out

* Break a window, head a skirmish with stones, and hold the bonnet, or handkerchief, which used to divide high-school boys when fighting.

† A pass on the very brink of the Castle-rock to the north, by which it is just possible for a goat, or a high-school boy, to turn the corner of the building, where it rises from the edge of the precipice. This was so favourite a feat with the "hell and neck boys" of the higher classes, that at one time sentinels were posted to prevent its repetition. One of the nine-steps was rendered more secure because the climber could take hold of the root of a nettle, so precarious were the means of passing this celebrated spot. The manning the Cowgate Port, especially in snow-ball time, was also a choice amusement, as it offered an inaccessible station for the boys, who used these missiles to the annoyance of the passengers. The gateway is now demolished; and probably most of its garrison lie as low as the fortress. To recollect that the author himself, however naturally disqualified, was one of those juvenile dreadnoughts, is a sad reflection to one who cannot now step over a brook without assistance.

of school—to stand forth like a true man—obey the stern order of a *Pande manum*, and endure my pawmies without wincing, like one that is determined not to be the better for them. In a word, before I knew thee, I knew nothing.

At College it was the same. When I was incorrigibly idle, your example and encouragement roused me to mental exertion, and shewed me the way to intellectual enjoyment. You made me an historian, a metaphysician (*invita Minerva*),—nay, by Heaven! you had almost made an advocate of me, as well as of yourself. Yes, rather than part with you, Alan, I attended a weary season at the Scotch Law Class; a wearier at the Civil; and with what excellent advantage, my note-book filled with caricatures of the professors and my fellow-students, is it not yet extant to testify?

"Thus far have I held on with thee untired;"

and, to say truth, purely and solely that I might travel the same road with thee. But it will not do, Alan. By my faith, man, I could as soon think of being one of those ingenious traders who cheat little Master Jackies on the outside of the partition with tops, balls, bats, and battledores, as a member of the long-robed fraternity within, who impose on grown country gentlemen with bouncing brocards of law.* Now, don't you read this

* The Hall of the Parliament House of Edinburgh was, in former days, divided into two unequal portions by a partition, the inner side of which was consecrated to the use of the Courts of Justice and the gentlemen of the law; while the outer division was occupied by the stalls of stationers, toymen, and the like, as in a modern bazaar. From the old play of the Plain Dealer, it

to your worthy father, Alan—he loves me well enough, I know, of a Saturday night; but he thinks me but idle company for any other day of the week. And here, I suspect, lies your real objection to taking a ramble with me through the southern counties in this delicious weather. I know the good gentleman has hard thoughts of me for being so unsettled as to leave Edinburgh before the Session rises; perhaps, too, he quarrels a little—I will not say, with my want of ancestry, but with my want of connections. He reckons me a lone thing in this world, Alan, and so, in good truth, I am; and it seems a reason to him why you should not attach yourself to me, that I can claim no interest in the general herd.

Do not suppose I forget what I owe him, for permitting me to shelter for four years under his roof: My obligations to him are not the less, but the greater, if he never heartily loved me. He is angry, too, that I will not, or cannot, be a lawyer, and, with reference to you, considers my disinclination that way as *pessimi exempli*, as he might say.

But he need not be afraid that a lad of your steadiness will be influenced by such a reed shaken by the winds as I am. You will go on doubting with Dirleton, and resolving those doubts with Stewart,* until the

seems such was formerly the case with Westminster-Hall. Minos has now purified his courts in both cities from all traffic but his own.

* "Sir John Nisbett of Dirleton's Doubts and Questions upon the Law, especially of Scotland;" and, "Sir James Stewart's Dirleton's Doubts and Questions on the Law of Scotland resolved

cramp speech* has been spoken *more solito* from the corner of the bench, and with covered head—until you have sworn to defend the liberties and privileges of the College of Justice—until the black gown is hung on your shoulders, and you are free as any of the Faculty to sue or defend. Then will I step forth, Alan, and in a character which even your father will allow may be more useful to you than had I shared this splendid termination of your legal studies. In a word, if I cannot be a counsel, I am determined to be a *client*, a sort of person without whom a lawsuit would be as dull as a supposed case. Yes, I am determined to give you your first fee. One can easily, I am assured, get into a lawsuit—it is only the getting out which is sometimes found troublesome;—and, with your kind father for an agent, and you for my counsel learned in the law, and the worshipful Master Samuel Griffiths to back me, a few sessions shall not tire my patience. In short, I

and answered," are works of authority in Scottish jurisprudence. As is generally the case, the Doubts are held more in respect than the solution.

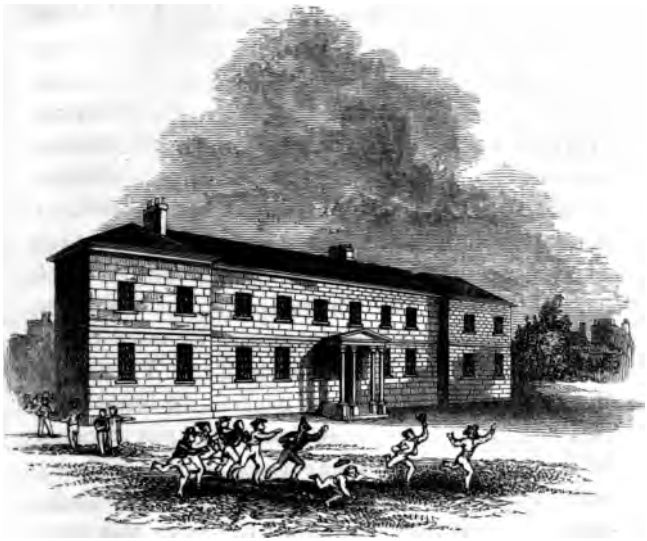
* Till of late years, every advocate who entered at the Scottish bar made a Latin address to the Court, faculty, and audience, in set terms, and said a few words upon a text of the civil law, to shew his Latinity and jurisprudence. He also wore his hat for a minute, in order to vindicate his right of being covered before the court, which is said to have originated from the celebrated lawyer, Sir Thomas Hope, having two sons on the bench while he himself remained at the bar. Of late this ceremony has been dispensed with, as occupying the time of the court unnecessarily. The entrant lawyer merely takes the oaths to government, and swears to maintain the rules and privileges of his order.

will make my way into Court, even if it should cost me the committing a *delict*, or at least a *quasi delict*.—You see all is not lost of what Erskine wrote, and Wallace taught.

Thus far I have fooled it off well enough; and yet, Alan, all is not at ease within me. I am affected with a sense of loneliness, the more depressing, that it seems to me to be a solitude peculiarly my own. In a country where all the world have a circle of consanguinity, extending to sixth cousins at least, I am a solitary individual, having only one kind heart to throb in unison with my own. If I were condemned to labour for my bread, methinks I should less regard this peculiar species of deprivation. The necessary communication of master and servant would be at least a tie which would attach me to the rest of my kind—as it is, my very independence seems to enhance the peculiarity of my situation. I am in the world as a stranger in the crowded coffeehouse, where he enters, calls for what refreshments he wants, pays his bill, and is forgotten so soon as the waiter's mouth has pronounced his "Thank ye, sir."

"I know your good father would term this *sinning my mercies*,* and ask how I should feel if, instead of being able to throw down my reckoning, I were obliged to deprecate the resentment of the landlord for consuming that which I could not pay for. I cannot tell how it is; but, though this very reasonable reflec-

* A peculiar Scottish phrase, expressive of ingratitude for the favours of Providence.



tion comes across me, and though I do confess that four hundred a-year in possesion, eight hundred in near prospect, and the L—d knows how many hundreds more in the distance, are very pretty and comfortable things, yet I would freely give one half of them to call your father *father*, though he should scold me for my idleness every hour of the day, and to call you *brother*, though a brother whose merits would throw my own so completely into the shade.

The faint, yet not improbable belief has often come across me, that your father knows something

more about my birth and condition than he is willing to communicate; it is so unlikely that I should be left in Edinburgh at six years old, without any other recommendation than the regular payment of my board to old M——* of the High School. Before that time, as I have often told you, I have but a recollection of unbounded indulgence on my mother's part, and the most tyrannical exertion of caprice on my own. I remember still how bitterly she sighed, how vainly she strove to soothe me, while, in the full energy of despotism, I roared like ten bull-calves, for something which it was impossible to procure for me. She is dead, that kind, that ill-rewarded mother! I remember the long faces—the darkened rooms—the black hangings—the mysterious impression made upon my mind by the hearse and mourning coaches, and the difficulty which I had to reconcile all this to the disappearance of my mother. I do not think I had before this event formed any idea of death, or that I had even heard of that final consummation of all that lives. The first acquaintance which I formed with it deprived me of my only relation.

A clergyman of venerable appearance, our only visiter, was my guide and companion in a journey of considerable length; and in the charge of another elderly man, substituted in his place, I know not how or why, I completed my journey to Scotland—and this is all I recollect.

* Probably Mathieson, the predecessor of Dr. Adams, to whose memory the author and his contemporaries owe a deep debt of gratitude.

I repeat the little history now, as I have a hundred times before, merely because I would wring some sense out of it. Turn, then, thy sharp, wire-drawing, lawyer-like ingenuity to the same task—make up my history as though thou wert shaping the blundering allegations of some blue-bonneted, hard-headed client, into a condescendence of facts and circumstances, and thou shalt be, not my Apollo—*quid tibi cum lyra?*—but my Lord Stair.* Meanwhile, I have written myself out of my melancholy and blue devils, merely by prosing about them; so I will now converse half an hour with Roan Robin in his stall—the rascal knows me already, and snickers whenever I cross the threshold of the stable.

The black which you bestrode yesterday morning, promises to be an admirable roadster, and ambled as easily with Sam and the portmanteau, as with you and your load of law-learning. Sam promises to be steady, and has hitherto been so. No long trial, you will say. He lays the blame of former inaccuracies on evil company—the people who were at the livery-stable were too seductive, I suppose—he denies he ever did the horse injustice—would rather have wanted his own dinner, he says. In this I believe him, as Roan Robin's ribs and coat shew no marks of contradiction. However, as he will meet with no saints in the inns we frequent, and as oats are sometimes as speedily converted into ale, as John Barleycorn himself, I shall keep a look-out after Master Sam. Stupid fellow! had he not

* Celebrated as a Scottish lawyer.

abused my good-nature, I might have chatted to him to keep my tongue in exercise; whereas now, I must keep him at a distance.

Do you remember what Mr. Fairford said to me on this subject,—it did not become my father's son to speak in that manner to Sam's father's son? I asked you what your father could possibly know of mine; and you answered, "As much, you supposed, as he knew of Sam's—it was a proverbial expression." This did not quite satisfy me, though I am sure I cannot tell why it should not. But I am returning to a fruitless and exhausted subject. Do not be afraid that I shall come back on this well-trodden yet pathless field of conjecture. I know nothing so useless, so utterly feeble and contemptible, as the groaning forth one's helpless lamentations into the ears of our friends.

I would fain promise you, that my letters shall be as entertaining, as I am determined they shall be regular and well filled. We have an advantage over the dear friends of old, every pair of them. Neither David and Jonathan, nor Orestes and Pylades, nor Damon and Pythias—although, in the latter case particularly, a letter by post would have been very acceptable—ever corresponded together; for they probably could not write, and certainly had neither post nor franks to speed their effusions to each other; whereas yours, which you had from the old peer, being handled gently, and opened with precaution, may be returned to me again, and serve to make us free of his Majesty's post-office, during the

whole time of my proposed tour.* Mercy upon us, Alan! what letters I shall have to send you, with an account of all that I can collect, of pleasant or rare, in this wildgoose jaunt of mine! All I stipulate is that you do not communicate them to the Scots Magazine; for though you used, in a left-handed way, to compliment me on my attainments in the lighter branches of literature, at the expense of my deficiency in the weightier matters of the law, I am not yet audacious enough to enter the portal which the learned Ruddiman so kindly opened for the acolytes of the Muses.—*Vale, sis memor mei.*

D. L.

P. S.—Direct to the Post-Office here. I shall leave orders to forward your letters wherever I may travel.

* It is well known and remembered, that when Members of Parliament enjoyed the unlimited privilege of franking by the mere writing the name on the cover, it was extended to the most extraordinary occasions. One noble lord, to express his regard for a particular regiment, franked a letter for every rank and file. It was customary also to save the covers and return them, in order that the correspondence might be carried on as long as the envelopes could hold together.

LETTER THE SECOND.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

Negatur, my dear Darsie—you have logic and law enough to understand the word of denial. I deny your conclusion. The premises I admit, namely, that when I mounted on that infernal hack, I might utter what seemed a sigh, although I deemed it lost amid the puffs and groans of the broken-winded brute, matchless in the complication of her complaints by any save she, the poor man's mare, renowned in song, that died

"A mile aboon Dundee."*

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* Alluding, as all Scotsmen know, to the humorous old song:—

"The auld man's mare's dead,
The puir man's mare's dead,
The auld man's mare's dead,
A mile aboon Dundee."

But credit me, Darsie, the sigh which escaped me, concerned thee more than myself, and regarded neither the superior metal of your cavalry, nor your greater command of the means of travelling. I could certainly have cheerfully ridden on with you for a few days; and assure yourself I would not have hesitated to tax your better-filled purse for our joint expenses. But you know my father considers every moment taken from the law as a step down hill; and I owe much to his anxiety on my account, although its effects are sometimes troublesome. For example.

I found, on my arrival at the shop in Brown's Square, that the old gentleman had returned that very evening, impatient, it seems, of remaining a night out of the guardianship of the domestic Lares. Having this information from James, whose brow wore rather an anxious look on the occasion, I despatched a Highland chairman to the livery stable with my Bucephalus, and slunk, with as little noise as might be, into my own den, where I began to mumble certain half-gnawed and not half-digested doctrines of our municipal code. I was not long seated, when my father's visage was thrust, in a peering sort of way, through the half-opened door; and withdrawn, on seeing my occupation, with a half-articulated *humph!* which seemed to convey a doubt of the seriousness of my application. If it were so, I cannot condemn him; for recollection of thee occupied me so entirely during an hour's reading, that although Stair lay before me, and notwithstanding that I turned over three or four pages, the sense of his lordship's clear

and perspicuous style so far escaped me, that I had the mortification to find my labour was utterly in vain.

Ere I had brought up my lee-way, James appeared with his summons to our frugal supper—radishes, cheese, and a bottle of the old ale—only two plates though—and no chair set for Mr. Darsie, by the attentive James Wilkinson. Said James, with his long face, lank hair, and very long pigtail in its leathern strap, was placed, as usual, at the back of my father's chair, upright as a wooden sentinel at the door of a puppet-show. "You may go down, James," said my father; and exit Wilkinson.—What is to come next? thought I; for the weather is not clear on the paternal brow.

My boots encountered his first glance of displeasure, and he asked me, with a sneer, which way I had been riding. He expected me to answer, "Nowhere," and would then have been at me with his usual sarcasm, touching the humour of walking in shoes at twenty shillings a pair. But I answered with composure, that I had ridden out to dinner as far as Noble-House. He started (you know his way), as if I had said that I had dined at Jericho; and as I did not choose to seem to observe his surprise, but continued munching my radishes in tranquillity, he broke forth in ire.

"To Noble-House, sir! and what had you to do at Noble-House, sir?—Do you remember you are studying law, sir?—that your Scots law trials are coming on, sir?—that every moment of your time just now is worth hours at another time? and have you leisure to go to Noble-House, sir?—and to throw your books behind you

for so many hours?—Had it been a turn in the Meadows, or even a game at golf—but Noble-House, sir!"

"I went so far with Darsie Latimer, sir, to see him begin his journey."

"Darsie Latimer?" he replied in a softened tone—"Humph!—Well, I do not blame you for being kind to Darsie Latimer; but it would have done as much good if you had walked with him as far as the toll-bar, and then made your farewells—it would have saved horse-hire—and your reckoning, too, at dinner."

"Latimer paid that, sir," I replied, thinking to soften the matter; but I had much better have left it unspoken.

"The reckoning, sir?" replied my father. "And did you sponge upon any man for a reckoning? Sir, no man should enter the door of a public-house without paying his lawing."

"I admit the general rule, sir," I replied; "but this was a parting-cup between Darsie and me; and I should conceive it fell under the exception of *Doch an dorroch.*"

"You think yourself a wit," said my father, with as near an approach to a smile as ever he permits to gild the solemnity of his features; "But I reckon you did not eat your dinner standing, like the Jews at their Passover? and it was decided in a case before the town-bailies of Cupar-Angus, when Luckie Simpson's cow had drunk up Luckie Jamieson's browst of ale, while it stood in the door to cool, that there was no damage to pay, because the crummie drank without sitting down; such being the very circumstance consti-

tuting *Doch an dorroch*, which is a standing drink, for which no reckoning is paid. Ha, sir! what says your advocateship (*fieri*) to that? *Exceptio firmat regulam* —But come, fill your glass, Alan; I am not sorry ye have shewn this attention to Darsie Latimer, who is a good lad, as times go; and having now lived under my roof since he left the school, why, there is really no great matter in coming under this small obligation to him."

As I saw my father's scruples were much softened by the consciousness of his superiority in the legal argument, I took care to accept my pardon as a matter of grace rather than of justice; and only replied, we should feel ourselves duller of an evening, now that you were absent. I will give you my father's exact words in reply, Darsie. You know him so well, that they will not offend you; and you are also aware, that there mingles with the good man's preciseness and formality, a fund of shrewd observation and practical good sense.

"It is very true," he said; "Darsie was a pleasant companion—but over waggish, over waggish, Alan, and somewhat scatter-brained.—By the way, Wilkinson must get our ale bottled in English pints now, for a quart bottle is too much, night after night, for you and me, without his assistance.—But Darsie, as I was saying, is an arch lad, and somewhat light in the upper story—I wish him well through the world; but he has little solidity, Alan, little solidity."

I scorn to desert an absent friend, Darsie, so I said

for you a little more than my conscience warranted: but your defection from your legal studies had driven you far to leeward in my father's good opinion.

"Unstable as water, he shall not excel," said my father; "or, as the Vulgate hath it, *Effusa est sicut aqua—non crescat.* He goeth to dancing-houses, and readeth novels—*sat est.*"

I endeavoured to parry these texts by observing, that the dancing-houses amounted only to one night at La Pique's ball—the novels (so far as matter of notoriety, Darsie) to an odd volume of Tom Jones.

"But he danced from night to morning," replied my father, "and he read the idle trash, which the author should have been scourged for, at least twenty times over. It was never out of his hand."

I then hinted, that in all probability your fortune was now so easy as to dispense with your prosecuting the law any farther than you had done; and therefore you might think you had some title to amuse yourself. This was the least palatable argument of all.

"If he cannot amuse himself with the law," said my father, snappishly, "it is the worse for him. If he needs not law to teach him to make a fortune, I am sure he needs it to teach him how to keep one; and it would better become him to be learning this, than to be scouring the country like a land-louper, going he knows not where, to see he knows not what, and giving treats at Noble-House to fools like himself" (an angry glance at poor me). "Noble-House, indeed!" he repeated, with elevated voice and sneering tone, as if

there were something offensive to him in the name, though I will venture to say that any place in which you had been extravagant enough to spend five shillings, would have stood as deep in his reprobation.

Mindful of your idea, that my father knows more of your real situation than he thinks proper to mention, I thought I would hazard a fishing observation. "I did not see," I said, "how the Scottish law would be useful to a young gentleman whose fortune would seem to be vested in England."—I really thought my father would have beat me.

"D'ye mean to come round me, sir, *per ambages*, as Counsellor Pest says? What is it to you where Darsie Latimer's fortune is vested, or whether he hath any fortune, ay or no?—And what ill would the Scottish law do to him, though he had as much of it as either Stair or Bankton, sir? Is not the foundation of our municipal law the ancient code of the Roman Empire, devised at a time when it was so much renowned for its civil polity, sir, and wisdom? Go to your bed, sir, after your expedition to Noble-House, and see that your lamp be burning and your book before you ere the sun peeps. *Ars longa, vita brevis*, —were it not a sin to call the divine science of the law by the inferior name of art."

So my lamp did burn, dear Darsie, the next morning, though the owner took the risk of a domiciliary visitation, and lay snug in bed, trusting its glimmer might, without further inquiry, be received as sufficient evidence of his vigilance. And now, upon this the

third morning after your departure, things are but little better; for though the lamp burns in my den, and Voet on the Pandects hath his wisdom spread open before me, yet as I only use him as a reading-desk on which to scribble this sheet of nonsense to Darsie Latimer, it is probable the vicinity will be of little furtherance to my studies.

And now, methinks, I hear thee call me an affected hypocritical varlet, who, living under such a system of distrust and restraint as my father chooses to govern by, nevertheless pretends not to envy you your freedom and independence.

Latimer, I will tell you no lies. I wish my father would allow me a little more exercise of my free will, were it but that I might feel the pleasure of doing what would please him of my own accord. A little more spare time, and a little more money to enjoy it, would, besides, neither misbecome my age nor my condition; and it is, I own, provoking to see so many in the same situation winging the air at freedom, while I sit here, caged up like a cobbler's linnet, to chant the same unvaried lesson from sunrise to sunset, not to mention the listening to so many lectures against idleness, as if I enjoyed or was making use of the means of amusement! But then I cannot at heart blame either the motive or the object of this severity. For the motive, it is and can only be my father's anxious, devoted, and unremitting affection and zeal for my improvement, with a laudable sense of the honour of the profession to which he has trained me.

As we have no near relations, the tie betwixt us is of even unusual closeness, though in itself one of the strongest which nature can form. I am, and have all along been, the exclusive object of my father's anxious hopes, and his still more anxious and engrossing fears; so what title have I to complain, although now and then these fears and hopes lead him to take a troublesome and incessant charge of all my motions? Besides, I ought to recollect, and, Darsie, I do recollect, that my father, upon various occasions, has shewn that he can be indulgent as well as strict. The leaving his old apartments in the Luckenbooths was ot him like divorcing the soul from the body; yet Dr. R—— did but hint that the better air of this new district was more favourable to my health, as I was then suffering under the penalties of too rapid a growth, when he exchanged his old and beloved quarters adjacent to the very Heart of Mid-Lothian, for one of those new tenements [entire within themselves] which modern taste has so lately introduced.* Instance also the inestimable favour which he conferred on me by receiving you into his house, when you had only the unpleasant alterna-

* The diminutive and obscure *place* called Brown's Square, was hailed about the time of its erection as an extremely elegant improvement upon the style of designing and erecting Edinburgh residences. Each house was, in the phrase used by appraisers, "finished within itself," or, in the still newer phraseology, "self-contained." It was built about the year 1763-4; and the old part of the city being near and accessible, this square soon received many inhabitants, who ventured to remove to so moderate a distance from the High Street.

tive of remaining, though a grown-up lad, in the society of mere boys. This was a thing so contrary to all my father's ideas of seclusion, of economy, and of the safety to my morals and industry, which he wished to attain, by preserving me from the society of other young people, that, upon my word, I am always rather astonished how I should have had the impudence to make the request, than that he should have complied with it.

Then for the object of his solicitude—Do not laugh, or hold up your hands, my good Darsie; but upon my word I like the profession to which I am in the course of being educated, and am serious in prosecuting the preliminary studies. The law is my vocation—in an especial, and, I may say, in an hereditary way, my vocation; for although I have not the honour to belong to any of the great families who form in Scotland, as in France, the noblesse of the robe, and with us, at least, carry their heads as high, or rather higher, than the noblesse of the sword,—for the former consist more frequently of the "first-born of Egypt,"—yet my grandfather, who, I dare say, was a most excellent person, had the honour to sign a bitter protest against the Union, in the respectable character of town-clerk to the ancient Borough of Birlthegroat; and there is some reason—shall I say to hope, or to suspect?—that he may have been a natural son of a first cousin of the then Fairford of that Ilk, who had been long numbered among the minor barons. Now my father mounted a step higher on the ladder of legal promotion, being, as

you know as well as I do, an eminent and respected Writer to his Majesty's Signet; and I myself am destined to mount a round higher still, and wear the honoured robe, which is sometimes supposed, like Charity, to cover a multitude of sins. I have, therefore, no choice but to climb upwards, since we have mounted thus high, or else to fall down at the imminent risk of my neck. So that I reconcile myself to my destiny; and while you are looking from mountain peaks at distant lakes and friths, I am, *de apicibus juris*, consoling myself with visions of crimson and scarlet gowns—with the appendages of handsome cowls, well lined with salary.

You smile, Darsie, *more tuo*, and seem to say it is little worth while to cozen one's self with such vulgar dreams; yours being, on the contrary, of a high and heroic character, bearing the same resemblance to mine, that a bench, covered with purple cloth, and plentifully loaded with session papers, does to some Gothic throne, rough with Barbaric pearl and gold. But what would you have?—*Sua quemque trahit voluptas.* And my visions of preferment, though they may be as unsubstantial at present, are nevertheless more capable of being realized, than your aspirations after the Lord knows what. What says my father's proverb? "Look to a gown of gold, and you will at least get a sleeve of it." Such is my pursuit; but what dost thou look to? The chance that the mystery, as you call it, which at present overclouds your birth and connections will clear up into something inexpressibly and inconceivably

brilliant; and this without any effort or exertion of your own, but purely by the good-will of Fortune. I know the pride and naughtiness of thy heart, and sincerely do I wish that thou hadst more beatings to thank me for, than those which thou dost acknowledge so gratefully. Then had I thumped these Quixotical expectations out of thee, and thou hadst not, as now, conceived thyself to be the hero of some romantic history, and converted, in thy vain imaginations, honest Griffiths, citizen and broker, who never bestows more than the needful upon his quarterly epistles, into some wise Alcander or sage Alquife, the mystical and magical protector of thy peerless destiny. But I know not how it was, thy skull got harder, I think, and my knuckles became softer; not to mention that at length thou didst begin to shew about thee a spark of something dangerous, which I was bound to respect at least, if I did not fear it.

And while I speak of this, it is not much amiss to advise thee to correct a little this cock-a-hoop courage of thine. I fear much that, like a hot-mettled horse, it will carry the owner into some scrape, out of which he will find it difficult to extricate himself, especially if the daring spirit which bore thee thither should chance to fail thee at a pinch. Remember, Darsie, thou art not naturally courageous; on the contrary, we have long since agreed, that, quiet as I am, I have the advantage in this important particular. My courage consists, I think, in strength of nerves and constitutional indifference to danger; which, though it never

pushes me on adventure, secures me in full use of my recollection, and tolerably complete self-possession, when danger actually arrives. Now, thine seems more what may be called intellectual courage; highness of spirit, and desire of distinction; impulses which render thee alive to the love of fame, and deaf to the apprehension of danger, until it forces itself suddenly upon thee. I own, that whether it is from my having caught my father's apprehensions, or that I have reason to entertain doubts of my own, I often think that this wildfire chase, of romantic situation and adventure, may lead thee into some mischief; and then what would become of Alan Fairford? They might make whom they pleased Lord-Advocate or Solicitor-General, I should never have the heart to strive for it. All my exertions are intended to vindicate myself one day in your eyes; and I think I should not care a farthing for the embroidered silk gown, more than for an old woman's apron, unless I had hopes that thou shouldst be walking the boards to admire and perhaps to envy me.

That this may be the case, I prithee—beware! See not a Dulcinea in every slipshod girl, who, with blue eyes, fair hair, a tattered plaid, and a willow-wand in her gripe, drives out the village cows to the loaning. Do not think you will meet a gallant Valentine in every English rider, or an Orson in every Highland drover. View things as they are, and not as they may be magnified through thy teeming fancy. I have seen thee look at an old gravel pit, till thou madest out capes,

and bays, and inlets, crags and precipices, and the whole stupendous scenery of the Isle of Feroe, in what was, to all ordinary eyes, a mere horsepond. Besides, did I not once find thee gazing with respect at a lizard, in the attitude of one who looks upon a crocodile? Now this is, doubtless, so far a harmless exercise of your imagination, for the puddle cannot drown you, nor the Lilliputian alligator eat you up. But it is different in society, where you cannot mistake the character of those you converse with, or suffer your fancy to exaggerate their qualities, good or bad, without exposing yourself not only to ridicule, but to great and serious inconveniences. Keep guard, therefore, on your imagination, my dear Darsie; and let your old friend assure you, it is the point of your character most pregnant with peril to its good and generous owner. Adieu! let not the franks of the worthy peer remain unemployed; above all, *Sis memor mei.*

A. F.

LETTER THE THIRD.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

Shepherd's Bush.

I HAVE received thine absurd and most conceited epistle. It is well for thee that, Lovelace and Belford like, we came under a convention to pardon every species of liberty which we may take with each other; since, upon my word, there are some reflections in your last, which would otherwise have obliged me to return forthwith to Edinburgh, merely to shew you I was not what you took me for.

Why, what a pair of prigs hast thou made of us!—I plunging into scrapes, without having courage to get out of them—thy sagacious self, afraid to put one foot before the other, lest it should run away from its companion; and so standing still like a post, out of mere faintness and coldness of heart, while all the world were driving full speed past thee. Thou a portrait-painter!—I tell thee, Alan, I have seen a better seated on the fourth round of a ladder, and painting a bare-breeched Highlander, holding a pint-stoup as big as himself, and a booted Lowlander in a bob-wig, supporting a glass of like dimensions; the

whole being designed to represent the sign of the Salutation.

How hadst thou the heart to represent thine own individual self, with all thy motions, like those of a great Dutch doll, depending on the pressure of certain springs, as duty, reflection, and the like; without the impulse of which, thou wouldst doubtless have me believe thou wouldst not budge an inch? But have I not seen Gravity out of his bed at midnight? and must I, in plain terms, remind thee of certain mad pranks? Thou hadst ever, with the gravest sentiments in thy mouth, and the most starched reserve in thy manner, a kind of lumbering proclivity towards mischief, although with more inclination to set it a-going, than address to carry it through; and I cannot but chuckle internally, when I think of having seen my most venerable monitor, the future President of some high Scottish Court, puffing, blowing, and floundering, like a clumsy cart horse in a bog, where his efforts to extricate himself only plunged him deeper at every awkward struggle, till some one—I myself, for example —took compassion on the moaning monster, and dragged him out by mane and tail.

As for me, my portrait is, if possible, even more scandalously caricatured. *I* fail or quail in spirit at the upcome! Where canst thou shew me the least sympton of the recreant temper with which thou hast invested me (as I trust), merely to set off the solid and impassible dignity of thine own stupid indifference? If you ever saw me tremble, be assured that my flesh,

like that of the old Spanish general, only quaked at the dangers into which my spirit was about to lead it. Seriously, Alan, this imputed poverty of spirit is a shabby charge to bring against your friend. I have examined myself as closely as I can, being, in very truth, a little hurt at your having such hard thoughts of me, and on my life I can see no reason for them. I allow you have, perhaps, some advantage of me in the steadiness and indifference of your temper; but I should despise myself, if I were conscious of the deficiency in courage which you seem willing enough to impute to me. However, I suppose this ungracious hint proceeds from sincere anxiety for my safety; and so viewing it, I swallow it as I would do medicine from a friendly doctor, although I believed in my heart he had mistaken my complaint.

This offensive insinuation disposed of, I thank thee, Alan, for the rest of thy epistle. I thought I heard your good father pronouncing the word Noble-House, with a mixture of contempt and displeasure, as if the very name of the poor little hamlet were odious to him, or, as if you had selected, out of all Scotland, the very place at which you had no call to dine. But if he had had any particular aversion to that blameless village, and very sorry inn, is it not his own fault that I did not accept the invitation of the Laird of Glengallacher, to shoot a buck in what he emphatically calls "his country?" Truth is, I had a strong desire to have complied with his Lairdship's invitation. To shoot a buck! Think how magnificent an idea to one who

never shot any thing but hedge-sparrows, and that with a horse pistol, purchased at a broker's stand in the Cowgate!—You, who stand upon your courage may remember that I took the risk of firing the said pistol for the first time, while you stood at twenty yard's distance; and that, when you were persuaded it would go off without bursting, forgetting all law but that of the biggest and strongest, you possessed yourself of it exclusively for the rest of the holydays. Such a day's sport was no complete introduction to the noble art of deer-stalking, as it is practised in the Highlands; but I should not have scrupled to accept honest Glengallacher's invitation, at the risk of firing a rifle for the first time, had it not been for the outcry which your father made at my proposal, in the full ardour of his zeal for King George, the Hanover succession, and the Presbyterian faith. I wish I had stood out, since I have gained so little upon his good opinion by submission. All his impressions concerning the Highlanders are taken from the recollections of the Forty-five, when he retreated from the West-Port with his brother volunteers, each to the fortalice of his own separate dwelling, so soon as they heard the Adventurer was arrived with his clans as near them as Kirkliston. The flight of Falkirk—*parma non bene selecta*—in which I think your sire had his share with the undaunted western regiment, does not seem to have improved his taste for the company of the Highlanders; (quære, Alan, dost thou derive the courage thou makest such boast of from an hereditary source?)—and stories of Rob Roy Mac-

gregor, and Sergeant Alan Mhor Cameron,* have served to paint them in still more sable colours to his imagination.

Now, from all I can understand, these ideas, as applied to the present state of the country, are absolutely chimerical. The Pretender is no more remembered in the Highlands, than if the poor gentleman were gathered to his hundred and eight fathers, whose portraits adorn the ancient walls of Holyrood; the broadswords have passed into other hands; the targets are used to cover the butter-churns; and the race has sunk, or is fast sinking, from ruffling bullies into tame cheaters. Indeed, it was partly my conviction that there is little to be seen in the north, which, arriving at your father's conclusions, though from different premises, inclined my course in this direction, where perhaps I shall see as little.

One thing, however, I *have* seen; and it was with pleasure the more indescribable, that I was debarred from treading the land which my eyes were permitted to gaze upon, like those of the dying prophet from the top of Mount Pisgah,—I have seen, in a word, the fruitful shores of merry England; merry England! of which I boast myself a native, and on which I gaze, even while raging floods and unstable quicksands divide us, with the filial affection of a dutiful son.

Thou canst not have forgotten, Alan—for when

* Of Rob Roy we have had more than enough. Alan Cameron, commonly called Sergeant Mhor, a freebooter of the same period, was equally remarkable for strength, courage, and generosity.

didst thou ever forget what was interesting to thy friend?—that the same letter from my friend Griffiths, which doubled my income, and placed my motions at my own free disposal, contained a prohibitory clause, by which, reason none assigned, I was prohibited, as I respected my present safety and future fortunes, from visiting England; every other part of the British dominions, and a tour, if I pleased, on the continent, being left to my own choice.—Where is the tale, Alan, of a covered dish in the midst of a royal banquet, upon which the eyes of every guest were immediately fixed, neglecting all the dainties with which the table was loaded? This clause of banishment from England—from my native country—from the land of the brave, and the wise, and the free—affects me more than I am rejoiced by the freedom and independence assigned to me in all other respects. Thus, in seeking this extreme boundary of the country which I am forbidden to tread, I resemble the poor tethered horse, which, you may have observed, is always grazing on the very verge of the circle to which it is limited by its halter.

Do not accuse me of romance for obeying this impulse towards the South; nor suppose that, to satisfy the imaginary longing of an idle curiosity, I am in any danger of risking the solid comforts of my present condition. Whoever has hitherto taken charge of my motions, has shewn me, by convincing proofs, more weighty than the assurances which they have withheld, that my real advantage is their principal object. I should be, therefore, worse than a fool did I object to

their authority, even when it seems somewhat capriciously exercised; for, assuredly, at my age, I might—intrusted as I am with the care and management of myself in every other particular—expect that the cause of excluding me from England should be frankly and fairly stated for my own consideration and guidance. However, I will not grumble about the matter. I shall know the whole story one day, I suppose; and perhaps, as you sometimes surmise, I shall not find there is any mighty matter in it after all.

Yet one cannot help wondering—but, plague on it, if I wonder any longer, my letter will be as full of wonders as one of Katterfelto's advertisements. I have a month's mind, instead of this damnable iteration of guesses and forebodings, to give thee the history of a little adventure which befell me yesterday; though I am sure you will, as usual, turn the opposite side of the spy-glass on my poor narrative, and reduce, *more tuo*, to the most petty trivialties, the circumstance to which thou accusest me of giving undue consequence. Hang thee, Alan, thou art as unfit a confidant for a youthful gallant with some spice of imagination, as the old taciturn secretary of Facardin of Trebizond. Nevertheless, we must each perform our separate destinies. I am doomed to see, act, and tell;—thou, like a Dutchman, enclosed in the same Diligence with a Gascon, to hear and shrug thy shoulders.

Of Dumfries, the capital town of this county, I have but little to say, and will not abuse your patience by reminding you, that it is built on the gallant river Nith, and

that its churchyard, the highest place of the whole town, commands an extensive and fine prospect. Neither will I take the traveller's privilege of inflicting upon you the whole history of Bruce poniarding the Red Comyn in the Church of the Dominicans at this place, and becoming a king and patriot, because he had been a church-breaker and a murderer. The present Dumfriezers remember and justify the deed, observing it was only a papist church—in evidence whereof, its walls have been so completely demolished, that no vestiges of them remain. They are a sturdy set of true-blue Presbyterians, these burghers of Dumfries; men after your father's own heart, zealous for the Protestant succession—the rather that many of the great families around are suspected to be of a different way of thinking, and shared, a great many of them, in the insurrection of the Fifteen, and some in the more recent business of the Forty-five. The town itself suffered in the latter era; for Lord Elcho, with a large party of the rebels, levied a severe contribution upon Dumfries, on account of the citizens having annoyed the rear of the Chevalier during his march into England.

Many of these particulars I learned from Provost C——, who, happening to see me in the market-place, remembered that I was an intimate of your father's, and very kindly asked me to dinner. Pray tell your father that the effects of his kindness to me follow me everywhere. I became tired, however, of this pretty town in the course of twenty-four hours, and crept

along the coast eastwards, amusing myself with looking out for objects of antiquity, and sometimes making, or attempting to make, use of my new angling-rod. By the way, old Cotton's instructions, by which I hoped to qualify myself for one of the gentle society of anglers, are not worth a farthing for this meridian. I learned this by mere accident, after I had waited four mortal hours. I shall never forget an impudent urchin, a cowherd, about twelve years old, without either brogue or bonnet, barelegged, and with a very indifferent pair of breeches—how the villain grinned in scorn at my landing-net, my plummet, and the gorgeous jury of flies which I had assembled to destroy all the fish in the river. I was induced at last to lend the rod to the sneering scoundrel, to see what he would make of it; and he not only half filled my basket in an hour, but literally taught me to kill two trouts with my own hand. This, and Sam having found the hay and oats, not forgetting the ale, very good at this small inn, first made me take the fancy of resting here for a day or two; and I have got my grinning blackguard of a Piscator leave to attend on me, by paying sixpence a-day for a herdboy in his stead.

A notably clean Englishwoman keeps this small house, and my bedroom is sweetened with lavender, has a clean sash-window, and the walls are, moreover, adorned with ballads of Fair Rosamond and Cruel Barbara Allan. The woman's accent, though uncouth enough, sounds yet kindly in my ear; for I have never yet forgotten the desolate effect produced on my infant

organs, when I heard on all sides your slow and broad northern pronunciation, which was to me the tone of a foreign land. I am sensible I myself have since that time acquired Scotch in perfection, and many a Scotticism withal. Still the sound of the English accentuation comes to my ears as the tones of a friend; and even when heard from the mouth of some wandering beggar, it has seldom failed to charm forth my mite. You Scotch, who are so proud of your own nationality, must make due allowance for that of other folks.

On the next morning I was about to set forth to the stream where I had commenced angler the night before, but was prevented, by a heavy shower of rain, from stirring abroad the whole forenoon; during all which time, I heard my varlet of a guide as loud with his blackguard jokes in the kitchen, as a footman in the shilling gallery;—so little are modesty and innocence the inseparable companions of rusticity and seclusion.

When after dinner the day cleared, and we at length sallied out to the river side, I found myself subjected to a new trick on the part of my accomplished preceptor. Apparently, he liked fishing himself better than the trouble of instructing an awkward novice, such as I; and in hopes of exhausting my patience, and inducing me to resign the rod, as I had done on the preceding day, my friend contrived to keep me thrashing the water more than an hour with a pointless hook. I detected this trick at last, by observing the rogue grinning with delight when he saw a large trout rise and dash harmless away from the angle. I gave him a sound cuff,

Alan; but the next moment was sorry, and, to make amends, yielded possession of the fishing-rod for the rest of the evening, he undertaking to bring me home a dish of trouts for my supper, in atonement for his offences.

Having thus got honourably rid of the trouble of amusing myself in a way I cared not for, I turned my steps towards the sea, or rather the Solway Firth, which here separates the two sister kingdoms, and which lay at about a mile's distance, by a pleasent walk over sandy knolls, covered with short herbage, which you call Links, and we English, Downs.

But the rest of my adventure would weary out my fingers, and must be deferred until to-morrow, when you shall hear from me, by way of continuation; and, in the meanwhile, to prevent overhasty conclusions, I must just hint to you, we are but yet on the verge of the adventure which it is my purpose to communicate.

DUMFRIES
Mousewald
Carlaverock
Ruthwell Kirk
Cummertrees
ANNAN
Stapleton
Dornock
SOLWAY FIRTH
RIVER NITH
Skinburne
IRISH
SEA
ABBEY HOLM
BROOMFIELD
WICTON
ALLONBY BAY
ALLONBY
CARLISLE
THURSBY
ARLTON
KIRKBRIDE
BRUMBURGH
KIRK HAMPTON
GREAT ORTON
EDEN
ESK R.
Sark R.
LOCHER W.
WAVES R.
ASPATRIA

LETTER THE FOURTH.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Shepherd's Bush.

I MENTIONED in my last, that having abandoned my fishing-rod as an unprofitable implement, I crossed over the open downs which divided me from the margin of the Solway. When I reached the banks of the great estuary, which are here very bare and exposed, the waters had receded from the large and level space of sand, through which a stream, now feeble and fordable, found its way to the ocean. The whole was illuminated by the beams of the low and setting sun, who shewed his ruddy front, like a warrior prepared for defence, over a huge battlemented and turreted wall of crimson and black clouds, which appeared like an immense Gothic fortress, into which the lord of day was descending. His setting rays glimmered bright upon the wet surface of the sands, and the numberless pools of water by which it was covered, where the inequality of the ground had occasioned their being left by the tide.

The scene was animated by the exertions of a number of horsemen, who were actually employed in hunting salmon. Ay, Alan, lift up your hands and

eyes as you will, I can give their mode of fishing no name so appropriate; for they chased the fish at full gallop, and struck them with their barbed spears, as you see hunters spearing boars in the old tapestry. The salmon, to be sure, take the thing more quietly than the boars; but they are so swift in their own element, that to pursue and strike them is the task of a good horseman, with a quick eye, a determined hand, and full command both of his horse and weapon. The shouts of the fellows as they galloped up and down in the animating exercise—their loud bursts of laughter when any of their number caught a fall—and still louder acclamations when any of the party made a capital stroke with his lance—gave so much animation to the whole scene, that I caught the enthusiasm of the sport, and ventured forward a considerable space on the sands. The feats of one horseman, in particular, called forth so repeatedly the clamorous applause of his companions, that the very banks rang again with their shouts. He was a tall man, well mounted on a strong black horse, which he caused to turn and wind like a bird in the air, carried a longer spear than the others, and wore a sort of fur cap or bonnet, with a short feather in it, which gave him on the whole rather a superior appearance to the other fishermen. He seemed to hold some sort of authority among them, and occasionally directed their motions both by voice and hand; at which times I thought his gestures were striking, and his voice uncommonly sonorous and commanding.

The riders began to make for the shore, and the interest of the scene was almost over, while I lingered on the sands, with my looks turned to the shores of England, still gilded by the sun's last rays, and, as it seemed, scarce distant a mile from me. The anxious thoughts which haunt me began to muster in my bosom, and my feet slowly and insensibly approached the river which divided me from the forbidden precincts, though without any formed intention, when my steps were arrested by the sound of a horse galloping; and as I turned, the rider (the same fisherman whom I had formerly distinguished) called out to me, in an abrupt manner, "Soho, brother! you are too late for Bowness to-night—the tide will make presently."

I turned my head and looked at him without answering; for, to my thinking, his sudden appearance (or rather, I should say, his unexpected approach) had, amidst the gathering shadows and lingering light, something in it which was wild and ominous.

"Are you deaf?" he added—"or are you mad?—or have you a mind for the next world?"

"I am a stranger," I answered, "and had no other purpose than looking on at the fishing—I am about to return to the side I came from."

"Best make haste, then," said he. "He that dreams on the bed of the Solway, may wake in the next world. The sky threatens a blast that will bring in the waves three feet a-breast."

So saying, he turned his horse and rode off, while I began to walk back towards the Scottish shore, a little

alarmed at what I had heard; for the tide advances with such rapidity upon these fatal sands, that well-mounted horsemen lay aside hopes of safety, if they see its white surge advancing while they are yet at a distance from the bank.

These recollections grew more agitating, and, instead of walking deliberately, I began a race as fast as I could, feeling, or thinking I felt, each pool of salt water through which I splashed, grow deeper and deeper. At length the surface of the sand did seem considerably more intersected with pools and channels full of water—either that the tide was really beginning to influence the bed of the estuary, or, as I must own is equally probable, that I had, in the hurry and confusion of my retreat, involved myself in difficulties which I had avoided in my more deliberate advance. Either way, it was rather an unpromising state of affairs, for the sands at the same time turned softer, and my footsteps, so soon as I had passed, were instantly filled with water. I began to have odd recollections concerning the snugness of your father's parlour, and the secure footing afforded by the pavement of Brown's Square and Scot's Close, when my better genius, the tall fisherman, appeared once more close to my side, he and his sable horse looming gigantic in the now darkening twilight.

"Are you mad?" he said, in the same deep tone which had before thrilled on my ear, "or are you weary of your life?—You will be presently amongst the quicksands."—I professed my ignorance of the way,

to which he only replied, "there is no time for prating —get up behind me."

He probably expected me to spring from the ground with the activity which these Borderers have, by constant practice, acquired in every thing relating to horsemanship; but as I stood irresolute, he extended his hand, and grasping mine, bid me place my foot on the toe of his boot, and thus raised me in a trice to the croupe of his horse. I was scarce securely seated, ere he shook the reins of his horse, who instantly sprung forward; but annoyed, doubtless, by the unusual burden, treated us to two or three bounds, accompanied by as many flourishes of his hind heels. The rider sat like a tower, notwithstanding that the unexpected plunging of the animal threw me forward upon him. The horse was soon compelled to submit to the discipline of the spur and bridle, and went off at a steady hand gallop, thus shortening the devious, for it was by no means a direct path, by which the rider, avoiding the loose quicksands, made for the northern bank.

My friend, perhaps I may call him my preserver,—for, to a stranger, my situation was fraught with real danger,—continued to press on at the same speedy pace, but in perfect silence, and I was under too much anxiety of mind to disturb him with any questions. At length we arrived at a part of the shore with which I was utterly unacquainted, when I alighted, and began to return, in the best fashion I could, my thanks for the important service which he had just rendered me.

The stranger only replied by an impatient "pshaw!"

and was about to ride off, and leave me to my own resources, when I implored him to complete his work of kindness, by directing me to Shepherd's Bush, which was, as I informed him, my home for the present.

"To Shepherd's Bush?" he said; "it is but three miles, but if you know not the land better than the sand, you may break your neck before you get there; for it is no road for a moping boy in a dark night; and, besides, there are the brook and the fens to cross."

I was a little dismayed at this communication of such difficulties as my habits have not called on me to contend with. Once more the idea of thy father's fireside came across me; and I could have been well contented to have swap'd the romance of my situation, together with the glorious independence of control which I possessed at the moment, for the comforts of the chimney-corner, though I were obliged to keep my eyes chained to Erskine's Larger Institutes.

I asked my new friend whether he could not direct me to any house of public entertainment for the night; and, supposing it probable he was himself a poor man, I added with the conscious dignity of a well-filled pocketbook, that I could make it worth any man's while to oblige me. The fisherman making no answer, I turned away from him with as gallant an appearance of indifference as I could command, and began to take, as I thought, the path which he had pointed out to me.

His deep voice immediately sounded after me to recall me. "Stay young man, stay—you have mistaken the road already.—I wonder your friends send out such

an inconsiderate youth, without some one wiser than himself to take care of him."

"Perhaps they might not have done so," said I, "if I had any friends who cared about the matter."

"Well, sir," he said, "it is not my custom to open my house to strangers, but your pinch is like to be a smart one; for, besides the risk from bad roads, fords, and broken ground, and the night, which looks both black and gloomy, there is bad company on the road sometimes—at least it has a bad name, and some have come to harm; so that I think I must for once make my rule give way to your necessity, and give you a night's lodging in my cottage."

Why was it, Alan, that I could not help giving an involuntary shudder at receiving an invitation so seasonable in itself, and so suitable to my naturally inquisitive disposition? I easily suppressed this untimely sensation; and, as I returned thanks, and expressed my hope that I should not disarrange his family, I once more dropped a hint of my desire to make compensation for any trouble I might occasion. The man answered very coldly, "Your presence will no doubt give me trouble, sir, but it is of a kind which your purse cannot compensate; in a word, although I am content to receive you as my guest, I am no publican to call a reckoning."

I begged his pardon, and, at his instance, once more seated myself behind him upon the good horse, which went forth steady as before—the moon, whenever she could penetrate the clouds, throwing the huge shadow

of the animal, with its double burden, on the wild and bare ground over which we passed.

Thou mayest laugh till thou lettest the letter fall if thou wilt, but it reminded me of the Magician Atlantes, on his hippogriff, with a knight trussed up behind him, in the manner Ariosto has depicted that matter. Thou art, I know, matter-of-fact enough to affect contempt of that fascinating and delicious poem; but think not that, to conform with thy bad taste, I shall forbear any suitable illustration which now or hereafter may occur to me.

On we went, the sky blackening around us, and the wind beginning to pipe such a wild and melancholy tune as best suited the hollow sounds of the advancing tide, which I could hear at a distance, like the roar of some immense monster defrauded of its prey.

At length, our course was crossed by a deep dell or dingle, such as they call in some parts of Scotland a den, and in others a cleuch, or narrow glen. It seemed, by the broken glances which the moon continued to throw upon it, to be steep, precipitous, and full of trees, which are, generally speaking, rather scarce upon these shores. The descent by which we plunged into this dell was both steep and rugged, with two or three abrupt turnings; but neither danger nor darkness impeded the motion of the black horse, who seemed rather to slide upon his haunches, than to gallop down the pass, throwing me again on the shoulders of the athletic rider, who, sustaining no inconvenience by the circumstance, continued to press the horse forward with

his heel, steadily supporting him at the same time by raising his bridle-hand, until we stood in safety at the bottom of the steep—not a little to my consolation, as, friend Alan, thou mayest easily conceive.

A very short advance up the glen, the bottom of which we had attained by this ugly descent, brought us in front of two or three cottages, one of which another blink of moonshine enabled me to rate as rather better than those of the Scottish peasantry in this part of the world; for the sashes seemed glazed, and there were what are called storm-windows in the roof, giving symptoms of the magnificence of a second storey. The scene around was very interesting; for the cottages, and the yards or crofts annexed to them, occupied a *haugh*, or holm, of two acres, which a brook of some consequence (to judge from its roar) had left upon one side of the little glen while finding its course close to the further bank, and which appeared to be covered and darkened with trees, while the level space beneath enjoyed such stormy smiles as the moon had that night to bestow.

I had little time for observation, for my companion's loud whistle, seconded by an equally loud halloo, speedily brought to the door of the principal cottage a man and a woman, together with two large Newfoundland dogs, the deep baying of which I had for some time heard. A yelping terrier or two, which had joined the concert, were silent at the presence of my conductor, and began to whine, jump up, and fawn upon him.

The female drew back when she beheld a stranger; the man, who had a lighted lantern, advanced, and without any observation, received the horse from my host, and led him, doubtless, to stable, while I followed my conductor into the house. When we had passed the *hallan*,* we entered a well-sized apartment, with a clean brick floor, where a fire blazed (much to my contentment) in the ordinary projecting sort of a chimney, common in Scottish houses. There were stone seats within the chimney; and ordinary utensils, mixed with fishing-spears, nets, and similar implements of sport, were hung around the walls of the place. The female who had first appeared at the door, had now retreated into a side apartment. She was presently followed by my guide, after he had silently motioned me to a seat; and their place was supplied by an elderly woman, in a gray stuff gown with a check apron and *toy*, obviously a menial, though neater in her dress than is usual in her apparent rank—an advantage which was counterbalanced by a very forbidding aspect. But the most singular part of her attire, in this very Protestant country, was a rosary, in which the smaller beads were black oak, and those indicating the *pater-noster* of silver, with a crucifix of the same metal.

This person made preparations for supper, by spreading a clean though coarse cloth over a large oaken table, placing trenchers and salt upon it, and arranging the fire to receive a gridiron. I observed her motions in silence, for she took no sort of notice of me, and as

* The partition which divides a Scottish cottage.

her looks were singularly forbidding, I felt no disposition to commence conversation.

When this duenna had made all preliminary arrangements, she took from the well-filled pouch of my conductor, which he had hung up by the door, one or two salmon, or *grilses*, as the smaller sort are termed, and selecting that which seemed best, and in highest season, began to cut it into slices, and to prepare a *grillade;* the savoury smell of which affected me so powerfully, that I began sincerely to hope that no delay would intervene between the platter and the lip.

As this thought came across me, the man who had conducted the horse to the stable entered the apartment, and discovered to me a countenance yet more uninviting than that of the old crone who was performing with such dexterity the office of cook to the party. He was perhaps sixty years old; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity; the last somewhat impaired perhaps by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance—eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair—a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth, of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have become

the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait. He was clad like a fisherman, in jacket and trowsers of the blue cloth commonly used by seamen, and had a Dutch case-knife, like that of a Hamburgh skipper, stuck into a broad buff belt, which seemed as if it might occasionally sustain weapons of a description still less equivocally calculated for violence.

This man gave me an inquisitive, and, as I thought, a sinister look upon entering the apartment; but without any farther notice of me, took up the office of arranging the table, which the old lady had abandoned for that of cooking the fish, and with more address than I expected from a person of his coarse appearance, placed two chairs at the head of the table, and two stools below; accommodating each seat to a cover, beside which he placed an allowance of barley-bread, and a small jug, which he replenished with ale from a large black jack. Three of these jugs were of ordinary earthenware, but the fourth, which he placed by the right-hand cover at the upper end of the table, was a flagon of silver, and displayed armorial bearings. Beside this flagon he placed a salt-cellar of silver, handsomely wrought, containing salt of exquisite whiteness, with pepper and other spices. A sliced lemon was also presented on a small silver salver. The two large water-dogs, who seemed perfectly to understand the nature of the preparations, seated themselves one on each side of the table, to be ready to receive their portion of the entertainment. I never saw finer animals, or which seemed to be more in-

fluenced by a sense of decorum, excepting that they slobbered a little as the rich scent from the chimney was wafted past their noses. The small dogs ensconced themselves beneath the table.

I am aware that I am dwelling upon trivial and ordinary circumstances, and that perhaps I may weary out your patience in doing so. But conceive me alone in this strange place, which seemed, from the universal silence, to be the very temple of Harpocrates—remember that this is my first excursion from home—forget not that the manner in which I had been brought hither had the dignity of danger and something the air of an adventure, and that there was a mysterious incongruity in all I had hitherto witnessed; and you will not, I think, be surprised that these circumstances, though trifling, should force themselves on my notice at the time, and dwell in my memory afterwards.

That a fisher, who pursued the sport perhaps for his amusement as well as profit, should be well mounted and better lodged than the lower class of peasantry, had in it nothing surprising; but there was something about all that I saw which seemed to intimate, that I was rather in the abode of a decayed gentleman, who clung to a few of the forms and observances of former rank, than in that of a common peasant, raised above his fellows by comparative opulence.

Besides the articles of plate which I have already noticed, the old man now lighted and placed on the table a silver lamp, or *cruisie*, as the Scottish term it, filled with very pure oil, which in burning diffused an

aromatic fragrance, and gave me a more perfect view of the cottage walls, which I had hitherto only seen dimly by the light of the fire. The *bink*,* with its usual arrangement of pewter and earthenware, which was most strictly and critically clean, glanced back the flame of the lamp merrily from one side of the apartment. In a recess, formed by the small bow of a latticed window, was a large writing-desk of walnut-tree wood, curiously carved, above which arose shelves of the same, which supported a few books and papers. The opposite side of the recess contained (as far as I could discern, for it lay in shadow, and I could at any rate have seen it but imperfectly from the place where I was seated) one or two guns, together with swords, pistols, and other arms—a collection which, in a poor cottage, and in a country so peaceful, appeared singular at least, if not even somewhat suspicious.

All these observations you may suppose, were made much sooner than I have recorded, or you (if you have not skipped) have been able to read them. They were already finished, and I was considering how I should open some communication with the mute inhabitants of the mansion, when my conductor re-entered from the side-door by which he had made his exit.

He had now thrown off his rough riding-cap, and his coarse jockey-coat, and stood before me in a gray jerkin trimmed with black, which sat close to, and set off, his large and sinewy frame, and a pair of trowsers

* The frame of wooden shelves placed in a Scottish kitchen for holding plates.

of a lighter colour, cut as close to the body as they are used by Highlandmen. His whole dress was of finer cloth than that of the old man; and his linen, so minute was my observation, clean and unsullied. His shirt was without ruffles, and tied at the collar with a black riband, which shewed his strong and muscular neck rising from it, like that of an ancient Hercules. His head was small, with a large forehead, and well-formed ears. He wore neither peruke nor hair-powder; and his chestnut locks, curling close to his head, like those of an antique statue, shewed not the least touch of time, though the owner must have been at least fifty. His features were high and prominent in such a degree, that one knew not whether to term them harsh or handsome. In either case, the sparkling gray eye, aquiline nose, and well-formed mouth, combined to render his physiognomy noble and expressive. An air of sadness, or severity, or of both, seemed to indicate a melancholy, and, at the same time, a haughty temper. I could not help running mentally over the ancient heroes, to whom I might assimilate the noble form and countenance before me. He was too young, and evinced too little resignation to his fate, to resemble Belisarius. Coriolanus, standing by the hearth of Tullus Aufidius, came nearer the mark; yet the gloomy and haughty look of the stranger had, perhaps, still more of Marius, seated among the ruins of Carthage.

While I was lost in these imaginations, my host stood by the fire, gazing on me with the same attention which I paid to him, until, embarrassed by his look, I

was about to break silence at all hazards. But the supper, now placed upon the table, reminded me, by its appearance, of those wants which I had almost forgotten while I was gazing on the fine form of my conductor. He spoke at length, and I almost started at the deep rich tone of his voice, though what he said was but to invite me to sit down to the table. He himself assumed the seat of honour, beside which the silver flagon was placed, and beckoned to me to sit down beside him.

Thou knowest thy father's strict and excellent domestic discipline has trained me to hear the invocation of a blessing before we break the daily bread, for which we are taught to pray—I paused a moment, and, without designing to do so, I suppose my manner made him sensible of what I expected. The two domestics, or inferiors, as I should have before observed, were already seated at the bottom of the table, when my host shot a glance of a very peculiar expression towards the old man, observing, with something approaching to a sneer, "Cristal Nixon, say grace—the gentleman expects one."

"The foul fiend shall be clerk, and say amen, when I turn chaplain," growled out the party addressed, in tones which might have become the condition of a dying bear; "if the gentleman is a whig he may please himself with his own mummery. My faith is neither in word nor writ, but in barley bread and brown ale."

"Mabel Moffat," said my guide, looking at the old woman, and raising his sonorous voice, probably

because she was hard of hearing, "canst thou ask a blessing upon our victuals?"

The old woman shook her head, kissed the cross which hung from her rosary, and was silent.

"Mabel will say grace for no heretic," said the master of the house, with the same latent sneer on his brow and in his accent.

At the same moment, the side-door already mentioned opened, and the young woman (so she proved) whom I had first seen at the door of the cottage, advanced a little way into the room, then stopped bashfully, as if she had observed that I was looking at her, and asked the master of the house, "if he had called?"

"Not louder than to make old Mabel hear me," he replied; "and yet," he added, as she turned to retire, "it is a shame a stranger should see a house where not one of the family can or will say a grace,—do thou be our chaplain."

The girl, who was really pretty, came forward with timid modesty, and, apparently unconscious that she was doing anything uncommon, pronounced the benediction in a silver-toned voice, and with affecting simplicity—her cheek colouring just so much as to shew, that on a less solemn occasion, she would have felt more embarrassed.

Now, if thou expectest a fine description of this young woman, Alan Fairford, in order to entitle thee to taunt me with having found a Dulcinea in the inhabitant of a fisherman's cottage on the Solway Frith, thou

shalt be disappointed; for, having said she seemed very pretty, and that she was a sweet and gentle-speaking creature, I have said all concerning her that I can tell thee. She vanished when the benediction was spoken.

My host, with a muttered remark on the cold of our ride, and the keen air of the Solway Sands, to which he did not seem to wish an answer, loaded my plate from Mabel's grillade, which, with a large wooden bowl of potatoes, formed our whole meal. A sprinkling from the lemon gave a much higher zest than the usual condiment of vinegar; and I promise you that, whatever I might hitherto have felt, either of curiosity or suspicion, did not prevent me from making a most excellent supper, during which little passed betwixt me and my entertainer, unless that he did the usual honours of the table with courtesy, indeed, but without even the affectation of hearty hospitality, which those in his (apparent) condition generally affect on such occasions, even when they do not actually feel it. On the contrary, his manner seemed that of a polished landlord towards an unexpected and unwelcome guest, whom, for the sake of his own credit, he receives with civility, but without either good-will or cheerfulness.

If you ask how I learned all this, I cannot tell you; nor, were I to write down at length the insignificant intercourse which took place between us, would it perhaps serve to justify these observations. It is sufficient to say, that in helping his dogs, which he did from time to time with great liberality, he seemed to discharge a duty much more pleasing to himself, than when he

paid the same attention to his guest. Upon the whole, the result on my mind was as I tell it you.

When supper was over, a small case-bottle of brandy, in a curious frame of silver filigree, circulated to the guests. I had already taken a small glass of the liquor, and, when it had passed to Mabel and to Cristal, and was again returned to the upper end of the table, I could not help taking the bottle in my hand, to look more at the armorial bearings, which were chased with considerable taste on the silver framework. Encountering the eye of my entertainer, I instantly saw that my curiosity was highly distasteful; he frowned, bit his lip, and shewed such uncontrollable signs of impatience, that, setting the bottle immediately down, I attempted some apology. To this he did not deign either to reply, or even to listen; and Cristal, at a signal from his master, removed the object of my curiosity, as well as the cup, upon which the same arms were engraved.

There ensued an awkward pause, which I endeavoured to break by observing, that "I feared my intrusion upon his hospitality had put his family to some inconvenience."

"I hope you see no appearance of it, sir," he replied, with cold civility. "What inconvenience a family so retired as ours may suffer from receiving an unexpected guest, is like to be trifling, in comparison of what the visiter himself sustains from want of his accustomed comforts. So far, therefore, as our connection stands, our accounts stand clear."

Notwithstanding this discouraging reply, I blundered on, as is usual in such cases, wishing to appear civil, and being, perhaps, in reality the very reverse. "I was afraid," I said, "that my presence had banished one of the family" (looking at the side-door) "from his table."

"If," he coldly replied, "I meant the young woman whom I had seen in the apartment, he bid me observe that there was room enough at the table for her to have seated herself, and meat enough, such as it was, for her supper. I might, therefore, be assured, if she had chosen it, she would have supped with us."

There was no dwelling on this or any other topic longer; for my entertainer, taking up the lamp, observed, that "my wet clothes might reconcile me for the night to their custom of keeping early hours; that he was under the necessity of going abroad by peep of day to-morrow morning, and would call me up at the same time, to point out the way by which I was to return to the Shepherd's Bush."

This left no opening for farther explanation; nor was there room for it on the usual terms of civility; for, as he neither asked my name, nor expressed the least interest concerning my condition, I—the obliged person—had no pretence to trouble him with such inquiries on my part.

He took up the lamp, and led me through the side-door into a very small room, where a bed had been hastily arranged for my accommodation, and, putting down the lamp, directed me to leave my wet clothes

on the outside of the door, that they might be exposed to the fire during the night. He then left me, having muttered something which was meant to pass for good-night.

I obeyed his directions with respect to my clothes, the rather that in despite of the spirits which I had drank, I felt my teeth begin to chatter, and received various hints from an aguish feeling, that a town-bred youth, like myself, could not at once rush into all the hardihood of country sports with impunity. But my bed, though coarse and hard was dry and clean; and I soon was so little occupied with my heats and tremors, as to listen with interest to a heavy foot, which seemed to be that of my landlord, traversing the boards (there was no ceiling, as you may believe) which roofed my apartment. Light, glancing through these rude planks, became visible as soon as my lamp was extinguished; and as the noise of the slow, solemn, and regular step continued, and I could distinguish that the person turned and returned as he reached the end of the apartment, it seemed clear to me that the walker was engaged in no domestic occupation, but merely pacing to and fro for his own pleasure. "An odd amusement this," I thought, "for one who had been engaged at least a part of the preceding day in violent exercise, and who talked of rising by the peep of dawn on the ensuing morning."

Meantime I heard the storm, which had been brewing during the evening, begin to descend with a vengeance; sounds, as of distant thunder (the noise of the

more distant waves, doubtless, on the shore), mingled with the roaring of the neighbouring torrent, and with the crashing, groaning, and even screaming of the trees in the glen, whose boughs were tormented by the gale. Within the house, windows clattered, and doors clapped, and the walls, though sufficiently substantial for a building of the kind, seemed to me to totter in the tempest.

But still the heavy steps perambulating the apartment over my head, were distinctly heard amid the roar and fury of the elements. I thought more than once I even heard a groan; but I frankly own, that, placed in this unusual situation, my fancy may have misled me. I was tempted several times to call aloud, and ask whether the turmoil around us did not threaten danger to the building which we inhabited; but when I thought of the secluded and unsocial master of the dwelling, who seemed to avoid human society, and to remain unperturbed amid the elemental war, it seemed, that to speak to him at that moment, would have been to address the spirit of the tempest himself, since no other being, I thought, could have remained calm and tranquil while winds and waters were thus raging around.

In process of time, fatigue prevailed over anxiety and curiosity. The storm abated, or my senses became deadened to its terrors, and I fell asleep ere yet the mysterious paces of my host had ceased to shake the flooring over my head.

It might have been expected that the novelty of my situation, although it did not prevent my slumbers,

would have at least diminished their profoundness, and shortened their duration. It proved otherwise, however; for I never slept more soundly in my life, and only awoke when, at morning dawn, my landlord shook me by the shoulder, and dispelled some dream, of which, fortunately for you, I have no recollection, otherwise you would have been favoured with it, in hopes you might have proved a second Daniel upon the occasion.

"You sleep sound"—said his full deep voice; "ere five years have rolled over your head, your slumbers will be lighter—unless ere then you are wrapped in the sleep which is never broken."

"How!" said I, starting up in the bed; "do you know any thing of me—of my prospects—of my views in life?"

"Nothing," he answered, with a grim smile; "but it is evident you are entering upon the world young, inexperienced, and full of hopes, and I do but prophesy to you what I would to any one in your condition.—But come; there lie your clothes—a brown crust and a draught of milk wait you, if you choose to break your fast; but you must make haste."

"I must first," I said, "take the freedom to spend a few minutes alone, before beginning the ordinary works of the day."

"Oh!—umph!—I cry your devotions pardon," he replied, and left the apartment.

Alan, there is something terrible about this man.

I joined him, as I had promised, in the kitchen where we had supped over night, where I found the

articles which he had offered me for breakfast without butter or any other addition.

He walked up and down while I partook of the bread and milk; and the slow measured weighty step seemed identified with those which I had heard last night. His pace, from its funereal slowness, seemed to keep time with some current of internal passion, dark, slow, and unchanged. — "We run and leap by the side of a lively and bubbling brook," thought I, internally, "as if we would run a race with it; but beside waters deep, slow, and lonely, our pace is sullen and silent as their course. What thoughts may be now corresponding with that furrowed brow, and bearing time with that heavy step?"

"If you have finished," said he, looking up to me with a glance of impatience, as he observed that I ate no longer, but remained with my eyes fixed upon him, "I wait to shew you the way."

We went out together, no individual of the family having been visible excepting my landlord. I was disappointed of the opportunity which I watched for of giving some gratuity to the domestics, as they seemed to be. As for offering any recompense to the Master of the Household, it seemed to me impossible to have attempted it.

What would I have given for a share of thy composure, who wouldst have thrust half-a-crown into a man's hand whose necessities seemed to crave it, conscious that you did right in making the proffer, and not caring sixpence whether you hurt the feelings of

him whom you meant to serve! I saw thee once give a penny to a man with a long beard, who, from the dignity of his exterior, might have represented Solon. I had not thy courage, and therefore I made no tender to my mysterious host, although, notwithstanding his display of silver utensils, all around the house bespoke narrow circumstances, if not actual poverty.

We left the place together. But I hear thee murmur thy very new and appropriate ejaculation, *Ohe, jam satis!*—The rest for another time. Perhaps I may delay farther communication till I learn how my favours are valued.

LETTER THE FIFTH.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

I HAVE thy two last epistles, my dear Darsie, and expecting the third, have been in no hurry to answer them. Do not think my silence ought to be ascribed to my failing to take interest in them, for, truly, they excel (though the task was difficult) thy usual excellings. Since the moon-calf who earliest discovered the Pandemonium of Milton in an expiring wood-fire—since the first ingenious urchin who blew bubbles out of soap and water, thou, my best of friends, hast the highest knack of making histories out of nothing. Wert thou to plant the bean in the nursery-tale, thou wouldst make out, so soon as it began to germinate, that the castle of the giant was about to elevate its battlements on the top of it. All that happens to thee gets a touch of the wonderful and the sublime from thy own rich imagination. Didst ever see what artists call a Claude Lorraine glass, which spreads its own particular hue over the whole landscape which you see through it?—thou beholdest ordinary events just through such a medium.

I have looked carefully at the facts of thy last long letter, and they are just such as might have befallen any little truant of the High School, who had got down

to Leith Sands, gone beyond the *prawn-dub*, wet his hose and shoon, and, finally, had been carried home, in compassion, by some high-kilted fishwife, cursing all the while the trouble which the brat occasioned her.

I admire the figure which thou must have made, clinging for dear life behind the old fellow's back—thy jaws chattering with fear, thy muscles cramped with anxiety. Thy execrable supper of broiled salmon, which was enough to insure the nightmare's regular visits for a twelvemonth, may be termed a real affliction; but as for the storm of Thursday last (such, I observe was the date), it roared, whistled, howled, and bellowed, as fearfully amongst the old chimney-heads in the Candlemaker-row, as it could on the Solway shore, for the very wind of it—*teste me per totam noctem vigilante.* And then in the morning again, when—Lord help you—in your sentimental delicacy you bid the poor man adieu, without even tendering him half-a-crown for supper and lodging!

You laugh at me for giving a penny (to be accurate, though, thou shouldst have said sixpence) to an old fellow, whom thou, in thy high flight, wouldst have sent home supperless, because he was like Solon or Belisarius. But you forget that the affront descended like a benediction into the pouch of the old gaberlunzie, who overflowed in blessings upon the generous donor—Long ere he would have thanked thee, Darsie, for thy barren veneration of his beard and his bearing. Then you laugh at my good father's retreat from Falkirk, just as if it were not time for a man to trudge when three or

four mounted knaves, with naked claymores, and heels as light as their fingers, were scampering after him, crying *furinish*. You remember what he said himself when the Laird of Bucklivat told him that *furinish* signified "stay a while." "What the devil," he said, surprised out of his Presbyterian correctness by the unreasonableness of such a request under the circumstances, "would the scoundrels have had me stop to have had my head cut off?"

Imagine such a train at your own heels, Darsie, and ask yourself whether you would not exert your legs as fast as you did in flying from the Solway tide. And yet you impeach my father's courage. I tell you he has courage enough to do what is right, and to spurn what is wrong—courage enough to defend a righteous cause with hand and purse, and to take the part of the poor man against his oppressor, without fear of the consequences to himself. This is civil courage, Darsie; and it is of little consequence to most men in this age and country, whether they ever possess military courage or no.

Do not think I am angry with you, though I thus attempt to rectify your opinions on my father's account. I am well aware, that, upon the whole, he is scarce regarded with more respect by me than by thee. And, while I am in a serious humour, which it is difficult to preserve with one who is perpetually tempting me to laugh at him, pray, dearest Darsie, let not thy ardour for adventure carry thee into more such scrapes as that of the Solway sands. The rest of the story is a mere

imagination; but that stormy evening might have proved, as the clown says to Lear, "a naughty night to swim in."

As for the rest, if you can work mysterious and romantic heroes out of old cross-grained fishermen, why, I for one will reap some amusement by the metamorphosis. Yet hold! even there, there is some need of caution. This same female chaplain—thou sayest so little of her, and so much of every one else, that it excites some doubt in my mind. *Very pretty* she is, it seems—and that is all thy discretion informs me of. There are cases in which silence implies other things than consent. Wert thou ashamed or afraid, Darsie, to trust thyself with the praises of the very pretty grace-sayer?—As I live thou blushest! Why, do I not know thee an inveterate Squire of Dames? and have I not been in thy confidence? An elegant elbow, displayed when the rest of the figure was muffled in a cardinal, or a neat well-turned ankle and instep, seen by chance as its owner tripped up the Old Assembly Close,* turned thy brain for eight days. Thou wert once caught, if I remember rightly, with a single glance of a single matchless eye, which, when the fair owner withdrew her veil, proved to be single in the literal sense of the word. And, besides, were you not another time enamoured of a voice—a mere voice, that mingled in the psalmody at the Old Greyfriars' Church—until you discovered the proprietor of that dulcet organ to

* Of old this almost deserted alley formed the most common access betwixt the High Street and the southern suburbs.

be Miss Dolly MacIzzard, who is both "back and breast," as our saying goes?

All these things considered, and contrasted with thy artful silence on the subject of this grace-saying Nereid of thine, I must beg thee to be more explicit upon that subject in thy next, unless thou wouldst have me form the conclusion that thou thinkest more of her than thou carest to talk of.

You will not expect much news from this quarter, as you know the monotony of my life, and are aware it must at present be devoted to uninterrupted study. You have said a thousand times, that I am only qualified to make my way by dint of plodding, and therefore plod I must.

My father seems to be more impatient of your absence than he was after your first departure. He is sensible, I believe, that our solitary meals want the light which your gay humour was wont to throw over them, and feels melancholy, as men do when the light of the sun is no longer upon the landscape. If it is thus with him, thou mayest imagine it is much more so with me, and canst conceive how heartily I wish that thy frolic were ended, and thou once more our inmate.

I resume my pen, after a few hours' interval, to say that an incident has occurred, on which you will yourself be building a hundred castles in the air, and which even I, jealous as I am of such baseless fabrics, cannot but own affords ground for singular conjecture.

My father has of late taken me frequently along with him when he attends the Courts, in his anxiety to see me properly initiated into the practical forms of business. I own I feel something on his account and my own from this over-anxiety, which, I dare say, renders us both ridiculous. But what signifies my repugnance? my father drags me up to his counsel learned in the law,—"Are you quite ready to come on to-day, Mr. Crossbite?—This is my son, designed for the bar—I take the liberty to bring him with me to-day to the consultation, merely that he may see how these things are managed."

Mr. Crossbite smiles and bows, as a lawyer smiles on the solicitor who employs him, and I dare say, thrusts his tongue into his cheek, and whispers into the first great wig that passes him, "What the d—l does old Fairford mean by letting loose his whelp on me?"

As I stood beside them, too much vexed at the childish part I was made to play to derive much information from the valuable arguments of Mr. Crossbite, I observed a rather elderly man, who stood with his eyes firmly bent on my father, as if he only waited an end of the business in which he was engaged, to address him. There was something, I thought, in the gentleman's appearance which commanded attention.—Yet his dress was not in the present taste, and though it had once been magnificent, was now antiquated and unfashionable. His coat was of branched velvet, with a satin lining, a waistcoat of violet-coloured silk, much

embroidered; his breeches the same stuff as the coat. He wore square-toed shoes, with foretops, as they are called; and his silk stockings were rolled up over his knee, as you may have seen in pictures, and here and there on some of those originals who seem to pique themselves on dressing after the mode of Methuselah. A *chapeau bras* and sword necessarily completed his equipment, which, though out of date, shewed that it belonged to a man of distinction.

The instant Mr. Crossbite had ended what he had to say, this gentleman walked up to my father, with, "Your servant, Mr. Fairford—it is long since you and I met."

My father, whose politeness, you know, is exact and formal, bowed, and hemmed, and was confused, and at length professed that the distance since they had met was so great, that though he remembered the face perfectly, the name, he was sorry to say, had—really—somehow—escaped his memory.

"Have you forgot Herries of Birrenswork?" said the gentleman, and my father bowed even more profoundly than before; though I think his reception of his old friend seemed to lose some of the respectful civility which he bestowed on him while his name was yet unknown. It now seemed to be something like the lip-courtesy which the heart would have denied had ceremony permitted.

My father, however, again bowed low, and hoped he saw him well.

"So well, my good Mr. Fairford, that I come hither

determined to renew my acquaintance with one or tw(old friends, and with you in the first place. I halt a my old resting-place—you must dine with me to-da at Paterson's, at the head of the Horse Wynd—it i near your new fashionable dwelling, and I have busi ness with you."

My father excused himself respectfully, and no without embarrassment—"he was particularly engage at home."

"Then I will dine with you, man," said Mr. Herrie of Birrenswork; "the few minutes you can spare m after dinner will suffice for my business; and I wil not prevent you a moment from minding your own— am no bottle-man."

You have often remarked that my father, though scrupulous observer of the rites of hospitality, seems t exercise them rather as a duty than as a pleasure indeed, but for a conscientious wish to feed the hungr and receive the stranger, his doors would open t guests much seldomer than is the case. I never sa so strong an example of this peculiarity (which should otherwise have said is caricatured in you description), as in his mode of homologating the sel given invitation of Mr. Herries. The embarrasse brow, and the attempt at a smile which accompanie his "We will expect the honour of seeing you i Brown Square at three o'clock," could not deceive an one, and did not impose upon the old Laird. It wa with a look of scorn that he replied, "I will reliev you then till that hour, Mr. Fairford;" and his whol

manner seemed to say, "It is my pleasure to dine with you, and I care not whether I am welcome or no."

When he turned away, I asked my father who he was.

"An unfortunate gentleman," was the reply.

"He looks pretty well on his misfortunes," replied I. "I should not have suspected that so gay an outside was lacking a dinner."

"Who told you that he does?" replied my father; "he is *omni suspicione major*, so far as worldly circumstances are concerned—It is to be hoped he makes a good use of them; though if he does, it will be for the first time in his life."

"He has then been an irregular liver?" insinuated I.

My father replied by that famous brocard with which he silences all unacceptable queries, turning in the slightest degree upon the failings of our neighbours, —"If we mend our own faults, Alan, we shall all of us have enough to do, without sitting in judgment upon other folks."

Here I was again at fault; but rallying once more, I observed, he had the air of a man of high rank and family.

"He is well entitled," said my father, "representing Herries of Birrenswork; a branch of that great and once powerful family of Herries, the elder branch whereof merged in the house of Nithesdale at the death of Lord Robin the Philosopher, Anno Domini sixteen hundred and sixty-seven."

"Has he still," said I, "his patrimonial estate of Birrenswork?"

"No" replied my father; "so far back as his father's time, it was a mere designation—the property being forfeited by Herbert Herries following his kinsman the Earl of Derwentwater, to the Preston affair in 1715. But they keep up the designation, thinking, doubtless, that their claims may be revived in more favourable times for Jacobites and for Popery; and folks who in no way partake of their fantastic capriccios, do yet allow it to pass unchallenged, *ex comitate*, if not *ex misericordia*.—But were he the Pope and the Pretender both, we must get some dinner ready for him, since he has thought fit to offer himself. So hasten home, my lad, and tell Hannah, Cook Epps, and James Wilkinson, to do their best; and do thou look out a pint or two of Maxwell's best—it is in the fifth bin—there are the keys of the wine-cellar.—Do not leave them in the lock—you know poor James's failing, though he is an honest creature under all other temptations—and I have but two bottles of the old brandy left—we must keep it for medicine, Alan.

Away went I—made my preparations—the hour of dinner came, and so did Mr. Herries of Birrenswork.

If I had thy power of imagination and description, Darsie, I could make out a fine, dark, mysterious, Rembrandt-looking portrait of this same stranger, which should be as far superior to thy fisherman, as a shirt of chain-mail is to a herring-net. I can assure you there is some matter for description about him; but knowing

my own imperfections, I can only say, I thought him eminently disagreeable and ill-bred.—No, *ill-bred* is not the proper word; on the contrary, he appeared to know the rules of good-breeding perfectly, and only to think that the rank of the company did not require that he should attend to them—a view of the matter infinitely more offensive than if his behaviour had been that of uneducated and proper rudeness. While my father said grace, the Laird did all but whistle aloud; and when I, at my father's desire, returned thanks, he used his toothpick, as if he had waited that moment for its exercise.

So much for Kirk!—with King, matters went even worse. My father, thou knowest, is particularly full of deference to his guests; and in the present case, he seemed more than usually desirous to escape every cause of dispute. He so far compromised his loyalty, as to announce merely "The King," as his first toast after dinner, instead of the emphatic "King George," which is his usual formula. Our guest made a motion with his glass, so as to pass it over the water-decanter which stood beside him, and added, "Over the water."

My father coloured, but would not seem to hear this. Much more there was of careless and disrespectful, in the stranger's manner and tone of conversation; so that though I know my father's prejudices in favour of rank and birth, and though I am aware his otherwise masculine understanding has never entirely shaken off the slavish awe of the great, which in his earlier days they had so many modes of commanding, still I could hardly

excuse him for enduring so much insolence—such it seemed to be—as this self-invited guest was disposed to offer to him at his own table.

One can endure a traveller in the same carriage, if he treads upon your toes by accident, or even through negligence; but it is very different when, knowing that they are rather of a tender description, he continues to pound away at them with his hoofs. In my poor opinion—and I am a man of peace—you can, in that case, hardly avoid a declaration of war.

I believe my father read my thoughts in my eye; for, pulling out his watch, he said, "Half past four, Alan—you should be in your own room by this time—Birrenswork will excuse you."

Our visiter nodded carelessly, and I had no longer any pretence to remain. But as I left the room, I heard this Magnate of Nithesdale distinctly mention the name of Latimer. I lingered; but at length a direct hint from my father obliged me to withdraw; and when, an hour afterwards, I was summoned to partake of a cup of tea, our guest had departed. He had business that evening in the High Street, and could not spare time even to drink tea. I could not help saying, I considered his departure as a relief from incivility. "What business has he to upbraid us," I said, "with the change of our dwelling from a more inconvenient to a better quarter of the town? What was it to him if we chose to imitate some of the conveniences or luxuries of an English dwelling-house, instead of living piled up above each other in flats? Have his patrician

birth and aristocratic fortunes given him any right to censure those who dispose of the fruits of their own industry according to their own pleasure?"

My father took a long pinch of snuff, and replied, "Very well, Alan; very well indeed. I wish Mr. Crossbite or Counsellor Pest had heard you; they must have acknowledged that you have a talent for forensic elocution; and it may not be amiss to try a little declamation at home now and then, to gather audacity and keep yourself in breath. But touching the subject of this paraffle of words, it's not worth a pinch of tobacco. D'ye think that I care for Mr. Herries of Birrenswork more than any other gentleman who comes here about buisness, although I do not care to go tilting at his throat, because he speaks like a gray goose, as he is? But to say no more about him, I want to have Darsie Latimer's present direction; for it is possible I may have to write the lad a line with my own hand—and yet I do not well know—but give me the direction at all events."

I did so, and if you have heard from my father accordingly, you know more, probably, about the subject of this letter than I who write it. But if you have not, then shall I have discharged a friend's duty, in letting you know that there certainly is something afloat between this disagreeable Laird and my father, in which you are considerably interested.

Adieu! and although I have given thee a subject for waking dreams, beware of building a castle too heavy for the foundation; which, in the present instance, is

barely the word Latimer occurring in a conversation betwixt a gentleman of Dumfriesshire and a W.S. of Edinburgh—*Cætera prorsus ignoro.*

LETTER THE SIXTH.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

[In continuation of Letters III. and IV.]

I TOLD thee I walked out into the open air with my grave and stern landlord. I could now see more perfectly than on the preceding night the secluded glen, in which stood the two or three cottages which appeared to be the abode of him and his family.

It was so narrow, in proportion to its depth, that no ray of the morning sun was likely to reach it till it should rise high in the horizon. Looking up the dell, you saw a brawling brook issuing in foamy haste from a covert of underwood, like a race-horse impatient to arrive at the goal; and if you gazed yet more earnestly, you might observe part of a high waterfall glimmering through the foliage, and giving occasion, doubtless, to

the precipitate speed of the brook. Lower down, the stream became more placid, and opened into a quiet piece of water, which afforded a rude haven to two or three fishermen's boats, then lying high and dry on the sand, the tide being out. Two or three miserable huts could be seen beside this little haven, inhabited probably by the owners of the boats, but inferior in every respect to the establishment of mine host, though that was miserable enough.

I had but a minute or two to make these observations, yet during that space my companion shewed symptoms of impatience, and more than once shouted, "Cristal —Cristal Nixon," until the old man of the preceding evening appeared at the door of one of the neighbouring cottages or outhouses, leading the strong black horse which I before commemorated, ready bridled and saddled. My conductor made Cristal a sign with his finger, and turning from the cottage door, led the way up the steep path or ravine which connected the sequestered dell with the open country.

Had I been perfectly aware of the character of the road down which I had been hurried with so much impetuosity on the preceding evening, I greatly question if I should have ventured the descent; for it deserved no better name than the channel of a torrent, now in a good measure filled with water, that dashed in foam and fury into the dell, being swelled with the rains of the preceding night. I ascended this ugly path with some difficulty, although on foot, and felt dizzy when I observed, from such traces as the rains

had not obliterated, that the horse seemed almost to have slid down it upon his haunches the evening before.

My host threw himself on his horse's back, without placing a foot in the stirrup—passed me in the perilous ascent, against which he pressed his steed as if the animal had had the footing of a wild cat. The water and mud splashed from his heels in his reckless course, and a few bounds placed him on the top of the bank, where I presently joined him, and found the horse and rider standing still as a statue; the former panting and expanding his broad nostrils to the morning wind, the latter motionless, with his eye fixed on the first beams of the rising sun, which already began to peer above the eastern horizon, and gild the distant mountains of Cumberland and Liddesdale.

He seemed in a reverie, from which he started at my approach, and, putting his horse in motion, led the way, at a leisurely pace, through a broken and sandy road, which traversed a waste, level, and uncultivated tract of downs, intermixed with morass, much like that in the neighbourhood of my quarters at Shepherd's Bush. Indeed the whole open ground of this district, where it approaches the sea, has, except in a few favoured spots, the same uniform and dreary character.

Advancing about a hundred yards from the brink of the glen, we gained a still more extensive command of this desolate prospect, which seemed even more dreary, as contrasted with the opposite shores of Cumberland, crossed and intersected by ten thousand lines of trees

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growing in hedge-rows, shaded with groves and woods of considerable extent, animated by hamlets and villas, from which thin clouds of smoke already gave sign of human life and human industry.

My conductor had extended his arm, and was pointing the road to Shepherd's Bush, when the step of a horse was heard approaching us. He looked sharply round, and having observed who was approaching, proceeded in his instructions to me, planting himself at the same time in the very middle of the path, which, at the place where we halted, had a slough on the one side, and a sand-bank on the other.

I observed that the rider who approached us slackened his horse's pace from a slow trot to a walk, as if desirous to suffer us to proceed, or at least to avoid passing us at a spot where the difficulty of doing so must have brought us very close to each other. You know my old failing, Alan, and that I am always willing to attend to anything in preference to the individual who has for the time possession of the conversation.

Agreeably to this amiable propensity, I was internally speculating concerning the cause of the rider keeping aloof from us, when my companion, elevating his deep voice so suddenly and so sternly, as at once to recall my wandering thoughts, exclaimed, "in the name of the devil, young man, do you think that others have no better use for their time than you have, that you oblige me to repeat the same thing to you three times over?—Do you see, I say, yonder thing at a mile's distance, that looks like a finger-post, or rather like a

gallows?—I would it had a dreaming fool hanging upon it, as an example to all meditative moon-calves! —Yon gibbet-looking pole will guide you to the bridge, where you must pass the large brook; then proceed straight forwards, till several roads divide at a cairn—Plague on thee, thou art wandering again!"

It is indeed quite true, that at this moment the horseman approached us, and my attention was again called to him as I made way to let him pass. His whole exterior at once shewed that he belonged to the Society of Friends, or, as the world and the world's law call them, Quakers. A strong and useful iron-gray galloway shewed, by its sleek and good condition, that the merciful man was merciful to his beast. His accoutrements were in the usual unostentatious, but clean and serviceable order, which characterizes these sectaries. His long surtout of dark-gray superfine cloth, descended down to the middle of his leg, and was buttoned up to his chin, to defend him against the morning air. As usual, his ample beaver hung down without button or loop, and shaded a comely and placid countenance, the gravity of which appeared to contain some seasoning of humour, and had nothing in common with the pinched puritanical air affected by devotees in general. The brow was open and free from wrinkles, whether of age or hypocrisy. The eye was clear, calm, and considerate, yet appeared to be disturbed by apprehension, not to say fear, as, pronouncing the usual salutation of "I wish thee a good morrow, friend," he indicated, by turning his palfrey close to one side of the path, a wish to

glide past us with as little trouble as possible—just as a traveller would choose to pass a mastiff of whose peaceable intentions he is by no means confident.

But my friend, not meaning, perhaps, that he should get off so easily, put his horse quite across the path, so that, without plunging into the slough, or scrambling up the bank, the Quaker could not have passed him. Neither of these was an experiment without hazard greater than the passenger seemed willing to incur. He halted, therefore, as if waiting till my companion should make way for him; and, as they sat fronting each other, I could not help thinking that they might have formed no bad emblem of Peace and War; for, although my conductor was unarmed, yet the whole of his manner, his stern look, and his upright seat on horseback were entirely those of a soldier in undress. He accosted the Quaker in these words,—"So ho! friend Joshua—thou art early to the road this morning. Has the spirit moved thee and thy righteous brethren to act with some honesty, and pull down yonder tide-nets that keep the fish from coming up the river?"

"Surely, friend, not so," answered Joshua, firmly, but good-humouredly at the same time; "thou canst not expect that our own hands should pull down what our purses established. Thou killest the fish with spear, line, and coble-net; and we, with snares and with nets, which work by the ebb and the flow of the tide. Each doth what seems best in his eyes to secure a share of the blessing which Providence hath bestowed on the river, and that within his own bounds. I prithee seek

no quarrel against us, for thou shalt have no wrong at our hand."

"Be assured I will take none at the hand of any man, whether his hat be cocked or broad-brimmed," answered the fisherman. "I tell you in fair terms, Joshua Geddes, that you and your partners are using unlawful craft to destroy the fish in the Solway by stake-nets and wears; and that we, who fish fairly, and like men, as our father's did, have daily and yearly less sport and less profit. Do not think gravity or hypocrisy can carry it off as you have done. The world knows you, and we know you. You will destroy the salmon which make the livelihood of fifty poor families, and then wipe your mouth, and go to make a speech at Meeting. But do not hope it will last thus. I give you fair warning, we will be upon you one morning soon, when we will not leave a stake standing in the pools of the Solway; and down the tide they shall every one go, and well if we do not send a lessee along with them."

"Friend," replied Joshua, with a constrained smile, "but that I know thou dost not mean as thou say'st, I would tell thee we are under the protection of this country's laws; nor do we the less trust to obtain their protection, that our principles permit us not, by any act of violent resistance, to protect ourselves."

"All villanous cant and cowardice," exclaimed the fisherman, "and assumed merely as a cloak to your hypocritical avarice."

"Nay, say not cowardice, my friend," answered the

Quaker, "since thou knowest there may be as much courage in enduring as in acting; and I will be judged by this youth, or by any one else, whether there is not more cowardice—even in the opinion of that world whose thoughts are the breath in thy nostrils—in the armed oppressor, who doth injury, than in the defenceless and patient sufferer, who endureth it with constancy."

"I will change no more words with you on the subject," said the fisherman, who, as if something moved at the last argument which Mr. Geddes had used, now made room for him to pass forward on his journey.—"Do not forget, however," he added, "that you have had fair warning, nor suppose that we will accept of fair words in apology for foul play. These nets of yours are unlawful—they spoil our fishings—we will have them down at all risks and hazards. I am a man of my word, friend Joshua."

"I trust thou art," said the Quaker; "but thou art the rather bound to be cautious in rashly affirming what thou wilt never execute. For I tell thee, friend, that though there is as great a difference between thee and one of our people, as there is between a lion and a sheep, yet I know and believe thou hast so much of the lion in thee, that thou wouldst scarce employ thy strength and thy rage upon that which professeth no means of resistance. Report says so much good of thee, at least, if it says little more."

"Time will try," answered the fisherman; "and hark thee, Joshua, before we part I will put thee in the

way of doing one good deed, which, credit me, is better than twenty moral speeches. Here is a stranger youth, whom Heaven has so scantily gifted with brains, that he will bewilder himself in the Sands, as he did last night, unless thou wilt kindly shew him the way to Shepherd's Bush; for I have been in vain endeavouring to make him comprehend the road thither —Hast thou so much charity under thy simplicity, Quaker, as to do this good turn?"

"Nay, it is thou, friend," answered Joshua, "that dost lack charity, to suppose any one unwilling to do so simple a kindness."

"Thou art right—I should have remembered it can cost thee nothing.—Young gentleman, this pious pattern of primitive simplicity will teach thee the right way to the Shepherd's Bush—ay, and will himself shear thee like a sheep, if you come to buying and selling with him."

He then abruptly asked me, how long I intended to remain at Shepherd's Bush.

I replied, I was at present uncertain—as long, probably, as I could amuse myself in the neighbourhood.

"You are fond of sport?" he added, in the same tone of brief inquiry.

I answered in the affirmative, but added, I was totally inexperienced.

"Perhaps if you reside here for some days," he said, "we may meet again, and I may have the chance of giving you a lesson."

Ere I could express either thanks or assent, he

turned short round with a wave of his hand, by way of adieu, and rode back to the verge of the dell from which we had emerged together; and as he remained standing upon the banks, I could long hear his voice while he shouted down to those within its recesses.

Meanwhile the Quaker and I proceeded on our journey for some time in silence; he restraining his sober-minded steed to a pace which might have suited a much less active walker than myself, and looking on me from time to time with an expression of curiosity, mingled with benignity. For my part, I cared not to speak first. It happened I had never before been in company with one of this particular sect, and, afraid that in addressing him I might unwittingly infringe upon some of their prejudices or peculiarities, I patiently remained silent. At length he asked me, whether I had been long in the service of the Laird, as men called him.

I repeated the words "in his service?" with such an accent of surprise, as induced him to say, "Nay, but, friend, I mean no offence; perhaps I should have said in his society—an inmate, I mean, in his house?"

"I am totally unknown to the person from whom we have just parted," said I, "and our connection is only temporary—He had the charity to give me his guidance from the Sands, and a night's harbourage from the tempest. So our acquaintance began, and there it is likely to end; for you may observe that our friend is by no means apt to encourage familiarity."

"So little so," answered my companion, "that thy

case is, I think, the first in which I ever heard of his receiving any one into his house; that is, if thou hast really spent the night there."

"Why should you doubt it?" replied I; "there is no motive I can have to deceive you, nor is the object worth it."

"Be not angry with me," said the Quaker, "but thou knowest that thine own people do not, as we humbly endeavour to do, confine themselves within the simplicity of truth, but employ the language of falsehood, not only for profit, but for compliment, and sometimes for mere diversion. I have heard various stories of my neighbour; of most of which I only believe a small part, and even then, they are difficult to reconcile with each other. But this being the first time I ever heard of his receiving a stranger within his dwelling, made me express some doubts. I prithee let them not offend thee."

"He does not," said I, "appear to possess in much abundance the means of exercising hospitality, and so may be excused from offering it in ordinary cases."

"That is to say, friend," replied Joshua, "thou hast supped ill, and perhaps breakfasted worse. Now my small tenement, called Mount Sharon, is nearer to us by two miles than thine inn; and although going thither may prolong thy walk, as taking thee off the straighter road to Shepherd's Bush, yet methinks exercise will suit thy youthful limbs, as well as a good plain meal thy youthful appetite. What say'st thou, my young acquaintance?"

"If it puts you not to inconvenience," I replied; for the invitation was cordially given, and my bread and milk had been hastily swallowed, and in small quantity.

"Nay," said Joshua, "use not the language of compliment with those who renounce it. Had this poor courtesy been very inconvenient, perhaps I had not offered it."

"I accept the invitation then," said I, "in the same good spirit in which you give it."

The Quaker smiled, reached me his hand, I shook it, and we travelled on in great cordiality with each other. The fact is, I was much entertained by contrasting in my own mind, the open manner of the kind-hearted Joshua Geddes, with the abrupt, dark, and lofty demeanour of my entertainer on the preceding evening. Both were blunt and unceremonious; but the plainness of the Quaker had the character of devotional simplicity, and was mingled with the more real kindness, as if honest Joshua was desirous of atoning, by his sincerity for the lack of external courtesy. On the contrary, the manners of the fisherman were those of one to whom the rules of good behaviour might be familiar, but who, either from pride or misanthropy, scorned to observe them. Still I thought of him with interest and curiosity, notwithstanding so much about him that was repulsive; and I promised myself, in the course of my conversation with the Quaker, to learn all that he knew on the subject. He turned the conversation, however, into a different channel, and inquired

into my own condition of life, and views in visiting this remote frontier.

I only thought it necessary to mention my name, and add, that I had been educated to the law, but finding myself possessed of some independence, I had of late permitted myself some relaxation, and was residing at Shepherd's Bush to enjoy the pleasure of angling.

"I do thee no harm, young man," said my new friend, "in wishing thee a better employment for thy grave hours, and a more humane amusement (if amusement thou must have) for those of a lighter character."

"You are severe, sir," I replied. "I heard you but a moment since refer yourself to the protection of the laws of the country—if there be laws, there must be lawyers to explain, and judges to administer them."

Joshua smiled and pointed to the sheep which were grazing on the downs over which we were travelling.—"Were a wolf," he said, "to come even now upon yonder flocks, they would crowd for protection doubtless, around the shepherd and his dogs; yet they are bitten and harassed daily by the one, shorn, and finally killed and eaten by the other. But I say not this to shock you; for, though laws and lawyers are evils, yet they are necessary evils in this probationary state of society, till man shall learn to render unto his fellows that which is their due, according to the light of his own conscience, and through no other compulsion. Meanwhile, I have known many righteous men who have followed thy intended profession in honesty and

uprightness of walk. The greater their merit, who walk erect in a path which so many find slippery."

"And angling,"—said I, "you object to that also as an amusement, you who, if I understood rightly what passed between you and my late landlord, are yourself a proprietor of fisheries."

"Not a proprietor," he replied, "I am only, in copartnery with others, a tacksman or lessee of some valuable salmon-fisheries a little down the coast. But mistake me not. The evil of angling, with which I class all sports, as they are called, which have the sufferings of animals for their end and object, does not consist in the mere catching and killing those animals with which the bounty of Providence hath stocked the earth for the good of man, but in making their protracted agony a principle of delight and enjoyment. I do indeed cause these fisheries to be conducted for the necessary taking, killing, and selling the fish; and, in the same way, were I a farmer, I should send my lambs to market. But I should as soon think of contriving myself a sport and amusement out of the trade of the butcher as out of that of the fisher."

We argued the point no farther; for though I thought his arguments a little too high strained, yet as my mind acquitted me of having taking delight in aught but the theory of field-sports, I did not think myself called upon stubbornly to advocate a practice which had afforded me so little pleasure.

We had by this time arrived at the remains of an old finger-post, which my host had formerly pointed

out as a landmark. Here, a ruinous wooden bridge, supported by long posts resembling crutches, served me to get across the water, while my new friend sought a ford a good way higher up, for the stream was considerably swelled.

As I paused for his rejoining me, I observed an angler at a little distance pouching trout after trout, as fast almost as he could cast his line; and I own, in spite of Joshua's lecture on humanity, I could not but envy his adroitness and success,—so natural is the love of sport to our minds, or so easily are we taught to assimilate success in field sports with ideas of pleasure, and with the praise due to address and agility. I soon recognized in the successful angler little Benjie, who had been my guide and tutor in that gentle art, as you have learned from my former letters. I called—I whistled—the rascal recognized me, and, starting like a guilty thing, seemed hesitating whether to approach or to run away; and when he determined on the former, it was to assail me with a loud, clamorous, and exaggerated report of the anxiety of all at the Shepherd's Bush for my personal safety; how my landlady had wept, how Sam and the ostler had not the heart to go to bed, but sat up all night drinking—and how he himself had been up long before daybreak to go in quest of me.

"And you were switching the water, I suppose," said I, "to discover my dead body?"

This observation produced a long "Na—a—a" of acknowledged detection; but, with his natural im-

pudence, and confidence in my good-nature, he immediately added, "that he thought I would like a fresh trout or twa for breakfast, and the water being in such rare trim for the sauman raun,* he couldna help taking a cast."

While we were engaged in this discussion, the honest Quaker returned to the farther end of the wooden bridge to tell me he could not venture to cross the brook in its present state, but would be under the necessity to ride round by the stone bridge, which was a mile and a half higher up than his own house. He was about to give me directions how to proceed without him, and inquire for his sister, when I suggested to him, that if he pleased to trust his horse to little Benjie, the boy might carry him round by the bridge, while we walked the shorter and more pleasant road.

Joshua shook his head, for he was well acquainted with Benjie, who, he said, was the naughtiest varlet in the whole neighbourhood. Nevertheless, rather than part company, he agreed to put the pony under his charge for a short season, with many injunctions that he should not attempt to mount, but lead the pony (even Solomon) by the bridle, under the assurances of sixpence in case of proper demeanour, and penalty that if he transgressed the orders given him, "verily he should be scourged."

Promises cost Benjie nothing, and he showered them out wholesale; till the Quaker at length yielded

* The bait made of salmon-roe salted and preserved. In a swollen river, and about the month of October, it is a most deadly bait.

up the bridle to him, repeating his charges, and enforcing them by holding up his forefinger. On my part, I called to Benjie to leave the fish he had taken at Mount Sharon, making, at the same time an apologetic countenance to my new friend, not being quite aware whether the compliment would be agreeable to such a condemner of field sports.

He understood me at once, and reminded me of the practical distinction betwixt catching the animals as an object of cruel and wanton sport, and eating them as lawful and gratifying articles of food after they were killed. On the latter point he had no scruples; but, on the contrary, assured me, that this brook contained the real red trout, so highly esteemed by all connoisseurs, and that, when eaten within an hour of their being caught, they had a peculiar firmness of substance and delicacy of flavour, which rendered them an agreeable addition to a morning meal, especially when earned, like ours, by early rising, and an hour or two's wholesome exercise.

But to thy alarm be it spoken, Alan, we did not come so far as the frying of our fish without farther adventure. So it is only to spare thy patience, and mine own eyes, that I pull up for the present, and send thee the rest of my story in a subsequent letter.

LETTER THE SEVENTH.

THE SAME TO THE SAME

[In continuation.]

Little Benjie, with the pony, having been sent off on the left side of the brook, the Quaker and I sauntered on, like the cavalry and infantry of the same army occupying the opposite banks of a river, and observing the same line of march. But, while my worthy companion was assuring me of a pleasant greensward walk

to his mansion, little Benjie, who had been charged to keep in sight, chose to deviate from the path assigned him, and, turning to the right, led his charge, Solomon, out of our vision.

"The villain means to mount him!" cried Joshua, with more vivacity than was consistent with his profession of passive endurance.

I endeavoured to appease his apprehensions, as he pushed on, wiping his brow with vexation, assuring him, that if the boy did mount, he would, for his own sake, ride gently.

"You do not know him," said Joshua, rejecting all consolation; "*he* do any thing gently!—no, he will gallop Solomon—he will misuse the sober patience of the poor animal who has borne me so long! Yes, I was given over to my own devices when I ever let him touch the bridle, for such a little miscreant there never was before him in this country."

He then proceeded to expatiate on every sort of rustic enormity of which he accused Benjie. He had been suspected of snaring partridges—was detected by Joshua himself in liming singing birds—stood fully charged with having worried several cats, by aid of a lurcher which attended him, and which was as lean, and ragged, and mischievous, as his master. Finally, Benjie stood accused of having stolen a duck, to hunt it with the said lurcher, which was as dexterous on water as on land. I chimed in with my friend, in order to avoid giving him further irritation, and declared, I should be disposed, from my own experience, to give

up Benjie as one of Satan's imps. Joshua Geddes began to censure the phrase as too much exaggerated, and otherwise unbecoming the mouth of a reflecting person; and, just as I was apologizing for it, as being a term of common parlance, we heard certain sounds on the opposite side of the brook, which seemed to indicate that Solomon and Benjie were at issue together. The sand-hills, behind which Benjie seemed to take his course, had concealed from us, as doubtless he meant they should, his ascent into the forbidden saddle, and, putting Solomon to his mettle, which he was seldom called upon to exert, they had cantered away together in great amity, till they came near to the ford from which the palfrey's legitimate owner had already turned back.

Here a contest of opinions took place between the horse and his rider. The latter, according to his instructions, attempted to direct Solomon towards the distant bridge of stone; but Solomon opined that the ford was the shortest way to his own stable. The point was sharply contested, and we heard Benjie gee-hupping, tchek-tcheking, and, above all, flogging in great style; while Solomon, who, docile in his general habits, was now stirred beyond his patience, made a great trampling and recalcitration; and it was their joint noise which we heard, without being able to see, though Joshua might too well guess, the cause of it.

Alarmed at these indications, the Quaker began to shout out, "Benjie—thou varlet!—Solomon—thou fool!" when the couple presented themselves in full

drive, Solomon having now decidedly obtained the better of the conflict, and bringing his unwilling rider in high career down to the ford. Never was there anger changed so fast into humane fear, as that of my good companion. "The varlet will be drowned!" he exclaimed—"a widow's son!—her only son!—and drowned!—let me go——" And he struggled with me stoutly as I hung upon him, to prevent him from plunging into the ford.

I had no fear whatever for Benjie; for the blackguard vermin, though he could not manage the refractory horse, stuck on his seat like a monkey. Solomon and Benjie scrambled through the ford with little inconvenience, and resumed their gallop on the other side.

It was impossible to guess whether on this last occasion Benjie was running off with Solomon, or Solomon with Benjie; but, judging from character and motives I rather suspected the former. I could not help laughing as the rascal passed me, grinning betwixt terror and delight, perched on the very pommel of the saddle, and holding with extended arms by bridle and mane; while, Solomon, the bit secured between his teeth, and his head bored down betwixt his fore-legs, passed his master in this unwonted guise as hard as he could pelt.

"The mischievous bastard!" exclaimed the Quaker, terrified out of his usual moderation of speech—"the doomed gallows-bird!—he will break Solomon's wind to a certainty."

I prayed him to be comforted—assured him a brushing gallop would do his favourite no harm—and reminded him of the censure he had bestowed on me a minute before, for applying a harsh epithet to the boy.

But Joshua was not without his answer;—"Friend youth," he said, "thou did'st speak of the lad's soul, which thou didst affirm belonged to the enemy, and of that thou couldst say nothing of thine own knowledge; on the contrary, I did but speak of his outward man, which will assuredly be suspended by a cord, if he mendeth not his manners. Men say that, young as he is, he is one of the Laird's gang."

"Of the Laird's gang!" said I, repeating the words in surprise—"Do you mean the person with whom I slept last night?—I heard you call him the Laird—Is he at the head of a gang?"

"Nay, I meant not precisely a gang," said the Quaker, who appeared in his haste to have spoken more than he intended—"a company, or party, I should have said; but thus it is, friend Latimer, with the wisest men, when they permit themselves to be perturbed with passion, and speak as in a fever, or as with the tongue of the foolish and the forward. And although thou hast been hasty to mark my infirmity, yet I grieve not that thou hast been a witness to it, seeing that the stumbles of the wise may be no less a caution to youth and inexperience, than is the fall of the foolish."

This was a sort of acknowledgment of what I had already begun to suspect—that my new friend's real goodness of disposition, joined to the acquired quietism

of his religious sect, had been unable entirely to check the effervescence of a temper naturally warm and hasty.

Upon the present occasion, as if sensible he had displayed a greater degree of emotion than became his character, Joshua avoided farther allusion to Benjie and Solomon, and proceeded to solicit my attention to the natural objects around us, which increased in beauty and interest, as, still conducted by the meanders of the brook, we left the common behind us, and entered a more cultivated and enclosed country, where arable and pasture ground was agreeably varied with groves and hedges. Descending now almost close to the stream, our course lay through a little gate, into a pathway, kept with great neatness, the sides of which were decorated with trees and flowering shrubs of the hardier species; until, ascending by a gentle slope, we issued from the grove, and stood almost at once in front of a low but very neat building, of an irregular form; and my guide, shaking me cordially by the hand, made me welcome to Mount Sharon.

The wood through which we had approached this little mansion was thrown around it both on the north and north-west, but, breaking off into different directions, was intersected by a few fields, well watered and sheltered. The house fronted to the south-east, and from thence the pleasure-ground, or, I should rather say the gardens, sloped down to the water. I afterwards understood that the father of the present proprietor had a considerable taste for horticulture, which had been inherited by his son, and had formed these

gardens, which, with their shaven turf, pleached alleys, wildernesses, and exotic trees and shrubs, greatly excelled anything of the kind which had been attempted in the neighbourhood.

If there was a little vanity in the complacent smile with which Joshua Geddes saw me gaze with delight on a scene so different from the naked waste we had that day traversed in company, it might surely be permitted to one, who, cultivating and improving the beauties of nature, had found therein, as he said, bodily health and a pleasing relaxation for the mind. At the bottom of the extended gardens the brook wheeled round in a wide semicircle, and was itself their boundary. The opposite side was no part of Joshua's domain, but the brook was there skirted by a precipitous rock of limestone, which seemed a barrier of Nature's own erecting around his little Eden of beauty, comfort, and peace.

"But I must not let thee forget," said the kind Quaker, "amidst thy admiration of these beauties of our little inheritance, that thy breakfast has been a light one."

So saying, Joshua conducted me to a small sashed door, opening under a porch amply mantled by honeysuckle and clematis, into a parlour of moderate size; the furniture of which, in plainness and excessive cleanliness, bore the characteristic marks of the sect to which the owner belonged.

Thy father's Hannah is generally allowed to be an exception to all Scottish housekeepers, and stands

unparalleled for cleanliness among the women of Auld Reekie; but the cleanliness of Hannah is sluttishness, compared to the scrupulous purifications of these people, who seem to carry into the minor decencies of life that conscientious rigour which they affect in their morals.

The parlour would have been gloomy, for the windows were small and the ceiling low; but the present proprietor had rendered it more cheerful by opening one end into a small conservatory, roofed with glass, and divided from the parlour by a partition of the same. I have never before seen this very pleasing manner of uniting the comforts of an apartment with the beauties of a garden, and I wonder it is not more practised by the great. Something of the kind is hinted at in a paper of the Spectator.

As I walked towards the conservatory to view it more closely, the parlour chimney engaged my attention. It was a pile of massive stone, entirely out of proportion to the size of the apartment. On the front had once been an armorial scutcheon; for the hammer, or chisel, which had been employed to deface the shield and crest, had left uninjured the scroll beneath, which bore the pious motto, "*Trust in God.*" Black-letter, you know, was my early passion, and the tombstones in the Greyfriars' Churchyard early yielded up to my knowledge as a decipherer what little they could tell of the forgotten dead.

Joshua Geddes paused when he saw my eye fixed on this relic of antiquity. "Thou canst read it?" he said.

I repeated the motto, and added, there seemed vestiges of a date.

"It should be 1537," said he; "for so long ago, at the least computation, did my ancestors, in the blinded times of Papistry, possess these lands, and in that year did they build their house."

"It is an ancient descent," said I, looking with respect upon the monument. "I am sorry the arms have been defaced."

It was perhaps impossible for my friend, Quaker as he was, to seem altogether void of respect for the pedigree which he began to recount to me, disclaiming all the while the vanity usually connected with the subject; in short, with the air of mingled melancholy, regret, and conscious dignity, with which Jack Fawkes used to tell us, at College, of his ancestor's unfortunate connection with the Gunpowder-Plot.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher,"—thus harangued Joshua Geddes of Mount Sharon;—"if we ourselves are nothing in the sight of Heaven, how much less than nothing must be our derivation from rotten bones and mouldering dust, whose immortal spirits have long since gone to their private account? Yes, friend Latimer, my ancestors were renowned among the ravenous and bloodthirsty men who then dwelt in this vexed country; and so much were they famed for successful freebooting, robbery, and bloodshed, that they are said to have been called Geddes, as likening them to the fish called a Jack, Pike, or Luce, and in our country tongue, a *Ged*—a goodly distinction truly

for Christian men! Yet did they paint this shark of the fresh waters upon their shields, and these profane priests of a wicked idolatry, the empty boasters called heralds, who make engraven images of fishes, fowls, and fourfooted beasts, that men may fall down and worship them, assigned the Ged for the device and escutcheon of my fathers, and hewed it over their chimneys, and placed it above their tombs; and the men were elated in mind, and became yet more Ged-like, slaying, leading into captivity, and dividing the spoil, until the place where they dwelt obtained the name of Sharing-Knowe, from the booty which was there divided amongst them and their accomplices. But a better judgment was given to my father's father, Philip Geddes, who, after trying to light his candle at some of the vain wild-fires then held aloft at different meetings and steeple-houses, at length obtained a spark from the lamp of the blessed George Fox, who came into Scotland spreading light among darkness, as he himself hath written, as plentifully as fly the sparkles from the hoof of the horse which gallops swiftly along the stony road."—Here the good Quaker interrupted himself with, "And that is very true, I must go speedily to see after the condition of Solomon."

A Quaker servant here entered the room with a tray, and inclining his head towards his master, but not after the manner of one who bows, said composedly, "Thou art welcome home, friend Joshua, we expected thee not so early; but what hath befallen Solomon thy horse?"

"What hath befallen him, indeed?" said my friend; "hath he not been returned hither by the child whom they call Benjie?"

"He hath," said his domestic, "but it was after a strange fashion; for he came hither at a swift and furious pace, and flung the child Benjie from his back, upon the heap of dung which is in the stable-yard."

"I am glad of it," said Joshua, hastily,—"glad of it, with all my heart and spirit!—But stay, he is the child of the widow—hath the boy any hurt?"

"Not so," answered the servant, "for he rose and fled swiftly."

Joshua muttered something about a scourge, and then inquired after Solomon's present condition.

"He seetheth like a steaming caldron," answered the servant; "and Bauldie, the lad walketh him about the yard with a halter, lest he take cold."

Mr. Geddes hastened to the stable-yard to view personally the condition of his favourite, and I followed, to offer my counsel as a jockey—Don't laugh, Alan, sure I have jockeyship enough to assist a Quaker—in this unpleasing predicament.

The lad who was leading the horse seemed to be no Quaker, though his intercourse with the family had given him a touch of their prim sobriety of look and manner. He assured Joshua that his horse had received no injury, and I even hinted that the exercise would be of service to him. Solomon himself neighed towards his master, and rubbed his head against the good Quaker's shoulder, as if to assure him of his being

quite well; so that Joshua returned in comfort to his parlour, where breakfast was now about to be displayed.

I have since learned that the affection of Joshua for his pony is considered as inordinate by some of his own sect; and that he has been much blamed for permitting it to be called by the name of Solomon, or any other name whatever; but he has gained so much respect and influence among them that they overlook these foibles.

I learned from him (whilst the old servant, Jehoiachim, entering and re-entering, seemed to make no end of the materials which he brought in for breakfast) that his grandfather Philip, the convert of George Fox, had suffered much from the persecution to which these harmless devotees were subjected on all sides during that intolerant period, and much of their family estate had been dilapidated. But better days dawned on Joshua's father, who, connecting himself by marriage with a wealthy family of Quakers in Lancashire, engaged successfully in various branches of commerce, and redeemed the remnants of the property, changing its name in sense, without much alteration of sound, from the Border appellation of Sharing-Knowe, to the evangelical appellation of Mount Sharon.

This Philip Geddes, as I before hinted, had imbibed the taste for horticulture and the pursuits of the florist, which are not uncommon among the peaceful sect he belonged to. He had destroyed the remnants of the old peel-house, substituting the modern mansion in its place; and while he reserved the hearth of his ances-

tors, in memory of their hospitality, as also the pious motto which they had chanced to assume, he failed not to obliterate the worldly and military emblems displayed upon the shield and helmet, together with all their blazonry.

In a few minutes after Mr. Geddes had concluded the account of himself and his family, his sister Rachel, the only surviving member of it, entered the room. Her appearance is remarkably pleasing, and although her age is certainly thirty at least, she still retains the shape and motion of an earlier period. The absence of everything like fashion or ornament was, as usual, atoned for by the most perfect neatness and cleanliness of her dress; and her simple close cap was particularly suited to eyes which had the softness and simplicity of the dove's. Her features were also extremely agreeable, but had suffered a little through the ravages of that professed enemy to beauty, the small-pox; a disadvantage which was in part counterbalanced by a well-formed mouth, teeth like pearls, and a pleasing sobriety of smile, that seemed to wish good here and hereafter to every one she spoke to. You cannot make any of your vile inferences here, Alan, for I have given a full-length picture of Rachel Geddes; so that you cannot say in this case, as in the letter I have just received, that she was passed over as a subject on which I feared to dilate. More of this anon.

Well, we settled to our breakfast after a blessing, or rather an extempore prayer, which Joshua made upon the occasion, and which the spirit moved him to prolong

rather more than I felt altogether agreeable. Then, Alan, there was such a despatching of the good things of the morning, as you have not witnessed since you have seen Darsie Latimer at breakfast. Tea and chocolate, eggs, ham, and pastry, not forgetting the broiled fish, disappeared with a celerity which seemed to astonish the good-humoured Quakers, who kept loading my plate with supplies, as if desirous of seeing whether they could, by any possibility, tire me out. One hint, however, I received, which put me in mind where I was. Miss Geddes had offered me some sweet-cake, which, at the moment, I declined; but presently afterwards, seeing it within my reach, I naturally enough helped myself to a slice, and had just deposited it beside my plate, when Joshua, mine host, not with the authoritative air of Sancho's doctor, Tirtea Fuera, but in a very calm and quiet manner, lifted it away and replaced it on the dish, observing only, "Thou didst refuse it before, friend Latimer."

These good folks, Alan, make no allowance for what your good father calls the Aberdeen-man's privilege, of "taking his word again;" or what the wise call second thoughts.

Bating this slight hint, that I was among a precise generation, there was nothing in my reception that was peculiar—unless, indeed, I were to notice the solicitous and uniform kindness with which all the attentions of my new friends were seasoned, as if they were anxious to assure me that the neglect of worldly compliments interdicted by their sect, only served to render their

hospitality more sincere. At length my hunger was satisfied, and the worthy Quaker, who, with looks of great good-nature, had watched my progress, thus addressed his sister :—

"This young man, Rachel, hath last night sojourned in the tents of our neighbour, whom men call the Laird. I am sorry I had not met him the evening before, for our neighbour's hospitality is too unfrequently exercised to be well prepared with the means of welcome."

"Nay, but, Joshua," said Rachel, "if our neighbour hath done a kindness, thou shouldst not grudge him the opportunity; and if our young friend hath fared ill for a night, he will the better relish what Providence may send him of better provisions."

"And that he may do so at leisure," said Joshua, "we will pray him, Rachel, to tarry a day or twain with us: he is young, and is but now entering upon the world, and our habitation may, if he will, be like a resting-place, from which he may look abroad upon the pilgrimage which he must make, and the path which he has to travel.—What sayest thou, friend Latimer? We constrain not our friends to our ways, and thou art, I think, too wise to quarrel with us for following our own fashions; and if we should even give thee a word of advice, thou wilt not, I think, be angry, so that it is spoken in season."

You know, Alan, how easily I am determined by anything resembling cordiality — and so, though a little afraid of the formality of my host and hostess, I accepted their invitation, provided I could get some messenger to send to Shepherd's Bush for my servant and portmanteau.

"Why, truly, friend," said Joshua, "thy outward

frame would be improved by cleaner garments; but I will do thine errand myself to the Widow Gregson's house of reception, and send thy lad hither with thy clothes. Meanwhile, Rachel will shew thee these little gardens, and then will put thee in some way of spending thy time usefully, till our meal calls us together at the second hour after noon. I bid thee farewell for the present, having some space to walk, seeing I must leave the animal Solomon to his refreshing rest."

With these words, Mr. Joshua Geddes withdrew. Some ladies we have known would have felt, or at least affected reserve or embarrassment, at being left to do the honours of the grounds to (it will be out, Alan)—a smart young fellow—an entire stranger. She went out for a few minutes, and returned in her plain cloak and bonnet, with her beaver-gloves, prepared to act as my guide, with as much simplicity as if she had been to wait upon thy father. So forth I sallied with my fair Quakeress.

If the house at Mount Sharon be merely a plain and convenient dwelling, of moderate size, and small pretensions, the gardens and offices, though not extensive, might rival an earl's in point of care and expense. Rachel carried me first to her own favourite resort, a poultry-yard, stocked with a variety of domestic fowls, of the more rare as well as the more ordinary kinds, furnished with every accommodation which may suit their various habits. A rivulet which spread into a pond for the convenience of the aquatic birds, trickled over gravel as it passed through the yards dedicated to the

land-poultry, which were thus amply supplied with the means they use for digestion.

All these creatures seemed to recognize the presence of their mistress, and some especial favourites hastened to her feet, and continued to follow her as far as their limits permitted. She pointed out their peculiarities and qualities, with the discrimination of one who had made natural history her study; and I own I never looked on barn-door fowls with so much interest before —at least until they were boiled or roasted. I could not help asking the trying question, how she could order the execution of any of the creatures of which she seemed so careful.

"It was painful," she said, "but it was according to the law of their being. They must die; but they knew not when death was approaching; and in making them comfortable while they lived, we contributed to their happiness as much as the conditions of their existence permitted to us."

I am not quite of her mind, Allan. I do not believe either pigs or poultry would admit that the chief end of their being was to be killed and eaten. However, I did not press the argument, from which my Quaker seemed rather desirous to escape; for, conducting me to the greenhouse, which was extensive, and filled with the choicest plants, she pointed out an aviary which occupied the farther end, where, she said, she employed herself with attending the inhabitants, without being disturbed with any painful recollections concerning their future destination.

I will not trouble you with any account of the various hothouses, and gardens, and their contents. No small sum of money must have been expended in erecting and maintaining them in the exquisite degree of good order which they exhibited. The family, I understood, were connected with that of the celebrated Millar, and had imbibed his taste for flowers, and for horticulture. But instead of murdering botanical names, I will rather conduct you to the *policy*, or pleasure-garden, which the taste of Joshua, or his father, had extended on the banks betwixt the house and river. This also, in contradistinction to the prevailing simplicity, was ornamented in an unusual degree. There were various compartments, the connection of which was well managed, and although the whole ground did not exceed five or six acres, it was so much varied as to seem four times larger. The space contained close alleys and open walks; a very pretty artificial waterfall; a fountain also, consisting of a considerable jet-d'eau, whose streams glittered in the sunbeams, and exhibited a continual rainbow. There was a cabinet of verdure, as the French call it, to cool the summer heat, and there was a terrace sheltered from the north-east by a noble holly-hedge, with all its glittering spears, where you might have the full advantage of the sun in the clear frosty days of winter.

I know that you, Alan, will condemn all this as bad and antiquated; for, ever since Dodsley has described the Leasowes, and talked of Brown's imitations of nature, and Horace Walpole's late Essay on Gardening,

you are all for simple nature—condemn walking up and down stairs in the open air, and declare for wood and wilderness. But *ne quid nimis.* I would not deface a scene of natural grandeur or beauty, by the introduction of crowded artificial decorations; yet such may, I think, be very interesting, where the situation, in its natural state, otherwise has no particular charms.

So that when I have a country-house (who can say how soon?) you may look for grottoes, and cascades, and fountains; nay, if you vex me by contradiction, perhaps I may go the length of a temple—so provoke me not, for you see of what enormities I am capable.

At any rate, Alan, had you condemned as artificial the rest of Friend Geddes's grounds, there is a willow walk by the very verge of the stream, so sad, so solemn, and so silent, that it must have commanded your admiration. The brook, restrained at the ultimate boundary of the grounds by a natural dam-dike or ledge of rocks, seemed, even in its present swoln state, scarcely to glide along; and the pale willow trees, dropping their long branches into the stream, gathered around them little coronals of the foam that floated down from the more rapid stream above. The high rock, which formed the opposite bank of the brook, was seen dimly through the branches, and its pale and splintered front, garlanded with long streamers of briers and other creeping plants, seemed a barrier between the quiet path which we trode, and the toiling and bustling world beyond. The path itself, following the sweep of the stream, made a very gentle curve; enough, however, served by

its inflection completely to hide the end of the walk, until you arrived at it. A deep and sullen sound, which increased as you proceeded, prepared you for this termination, which was indeed only a plain root-seat, from which you looked on a fall of about six or seven feet, where the brook flung itself over the ledge of natural rock I have already mentioned, which there crossed its course.

The quiet and twilight seclusion of this walk rendered it a fit scene for confidential communing; and having nothing more interesting to say to my fair Quaker, I took the liberty of questioning her about the Laird; for you are, or ought to be, aware, that next to discussing the affairs of the heart, the fair sex are most interested in those of their neighbours.

I did not conceal either my curiosity, or the check which it had received from Joshua, and I saw that my companion answered with embarrassment. "I must not speak otherwise than truly," she said; "and therefore I tell thee, that my brother dislikes, and that I fear, the man of whom thou hast asked me. Perhaps we are both wrong—but he is a man of violence, and hath great influence over many, who, following the trade of sailors and fishermen, become as rude as the elements with which they contend. He hath no certain name among them, which is not unusual, their rude fashion being to distinguish each other by nicknames; and they have called him the Laird of the Lakes (not remembering there should be no one called Lord, save one only), in idle derision; the pools of salt water

left by the tide among the sands being called the Lakes of Solway."

"Has he no other revenue than he derives from these sands?" I asked.

"That I cannot answer," replied Rachel; "men say that he wants not money, though he lives like an ordinary fisherman, and that he imparts freely of his means to the poor around him. They intimate that he is a man of consequence, once deeply engaged in the unhappy affair of the rebellion, and even still too much in danger from the Government to assume his own name. He is often absent from his cottage at Broken-burn-cliffs, for weeks and months."

"I should have thought," said I, "that the Government would scarce, at this time of day, be likely to proceed against any one even of the most obnoxious rebels. Many years have passed away——"

"It is true," she replied; "yet such persons may understand that their being connived at depends on their living in obscurity. But indeed there can nothing certain be known among these rude people. The truth is not in them—most of them participate in the unlawful trade betwixt these parts and the neighbouring shore of England; and they are familiar with every species of falsehood and deceit."

"It is a pity," I remarked, "your brother should have neighbours of such a description, especially as I understand he is at some variance with them."

"Where, when, and about what matter?" answered Miss Geddes, with an eager and timorous anxiety,

which made me regret having touched on the subject.

I told her, in a way as little alarming as I could devise, the purport of what passed betwixt this Laird of the Lakes and her brother, at their morning's interview.

"You affright me much," answered she; "it is this very circumstance which has scared me in the watches of the night. When my brother Joshua withdrew from an active share in the commercial concerns of my father, being satisfied with the portion of worldly substance which he already possessed, there were one or two undertakings in which he retained an interest, either because his withdrawing might have been prejudicial to friends, or because he wished to retain some mode of occupying his time. Amongst the more important of these, is a fishing station on the coast, where, by certain improved modes of erecting snares, opening at the advance of the tide, and shutting at the reflux, many more fish are taken than can be destroyed by those who, like the men of Broken-burn, use only the boat-net and spear, or fishing-rod. They complain of these tide-nets, as men call them, as an innovation, and pretend to a right to remove and destroy them by the strong hand. I fear me, this man of violence, whom they call the Laird, will execute these his threats, which cannot be without both loss and danger to my brother."

"Mr. Geddes," said I, "ought to apply to the civil magistrate; there are soldiers at Dumfries who would be detached for his protection."

"Thou speakest, friend Latimer," answered the lady, "as one who is still in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. God forbid that we should endeavour to preserve nets of flax and stakes of wood, or the Mammon of gain which they procure for us, by the hands of men of war, and at the risk of spilling human blood!"

"I respect your scruples," I replied; "but since such is your way of thinking, your brother ought to avert the danger by compromise or submission."

"Perhaps it would be best," answered Rachel: "but what can *I* say? Even in the best-trained temper there may remain some leaven of the old Adam; and I know not whether it is this or a better spirit that maketh my brother Joshua determine, that though he will not resist force by force, neither will he yield up his right to mere threats, or encourage wrong to others by yielding to menaces. His partners, he says, confide in his steadiness; and that he must not disappoint them by yielding up their right for the fear of the threats of man, whose breath is in his nostrils."

This observation convinced me that the spirit of the old sharers of the spoil was not utterly departed even from the bosom of the peaceful Quaker; and I could not help confessing internally that Joshua had the right, when he averred that there was as much courage in sufferance as in exertion.

As we approached the further end of the willow walk, the sullen and continuous sound of the dashing waters became still more and more audible, and at

length rendered it difficult for us to communicate with each other. The conversation dropped, but apparently my companion continued to dwell upon the apprehensions which it had excited. At the bottom of the walk, we obtained a view of the cascade, where the swollen brook flung itself in foam and tumult over the natural barrier of rock, which seemed in vain to attempt to bar its course. I gazed with delight, and, turning to express my sentiments to my companion, I observed that she had folded her hands in an attitude of sorrowful resignation, which shewed her thoughts were far from the scene which lay before her. When she saw that her abstraction was observed, she resumed her former placidity of manner; and having given me sufficient time to admire this termination of our sober and secluded walk, proposed that we should return to the house through her brother's farm. "Even we Quakers, as we are called, have our little pride," she said; "and my brother Joshua would not forgive me, were I not to shew thee the fields which he taketh delight to cultivate, after the newest and best fashion; for which, I promise thee, he hath received much praise from good judges, as well as some ridicule from those who think it folly to improve on the customs of our ancestors."

As she spoke, she opened a low door, leading through a moss and ivy-covered wall, the boundary of the pleasure-ground, into the open fields, through which we moved by a convenient path, leading, with good taste and simplicity, by stile and hedge-row, through

pasturage, and arable, and woodland; so that, in all ordinary weather, the good man might, without even soiling his shoes, perform his perambulation round the farm. There were seats also, on which to rest; and though not adorned with inscriptions, nor quite so frequent in occurrence as those mentioned in the account of the Leasowes, their situation was always chosen with respect to some distant prospect to be commanded, or some home-view to be enjoyed.

But what struck me most in Joshua's domain, was the quantity and the tameness of the game. The hen partridge scarce abandoned the roost at the foot of the hedge where she had assembled her covey, though the path went close beside her; and the hare, remaining on her form, gazed at us as we passed, with her full dark eye, or rising lazily and hopping to a little distance, stood erect to look at us with more curiosity than apprehension. I observed to Miss Geddes the extreme tameness of these timid and shy animals, and she informed me that their confidence arose from protection in the summer and relief during the winter.

"They are pets," she said, "of my brother, who considers them as the better entitled to his kindness that they are a race persecuted by the world in general. He denieth himself," she said, "even the company of a dog, that these creatures may here at least enjoy undisturbed security. Yet this harmless or humane propensity, or humour, hath given offence," she added, "to our dangerous neighbours."

She explained this, by telling me that my host of

the preceding night was remarkable for his attachment to field-sports, which he pursued without much regard to the wishes of the individuals over whose property he followed them. The undefined mixture of respect and fear with which he was generally regarded, induced most of the neighbouring landholders to connive at what they would perhaps in another have punished as a trespass; but Joshua Geddes would not permit the intrusion of any one upon his premises, and as he had before offended several country neighbours, who, because he would neither shoot himself nor permit others to do so, compared him to the dog in the manger, so he now aggravated the displeasure which the Laird of the Lakes had already conceived against him, by positively debarring him from pursuing his sport over his grounds —"So that," said Rachel Geddes, "I sometimes wish our lot had been cast elsewhere than in these pleasant borders, where, if we had less of beauty around us, we might have had a neighbourhood of peace and good-will."

We at length returned to the house, where Miss Geddes shewed me a small study, containing a little collection of books, in two separate presses.

"These," said she, pointing to the smaller press, "will, if thou bestowest thy leisure upon them, do thee good; and these," pointing to the other and larger cabinet, "can, I believe, do thee little harm. Some of our people do indeed hold, that every writer who is not with us is against us; but brother Joshua is mitigated in his opinions, and correspondeth with our friend

John Scot of Amwell, who hath himself constructed verses well approved of even in the world.—I wish thee many good thoughts till our family meet at the hour of dinner."

Left alone, I tried both collections; the first consisted entirely of religious and controversial tracts, and the latter formed a small selection of history, and of moral writers, both in prose and verse.

Neither collection promising much amusement, thou hast, in these close pages, the fruits of my tediousness; and truly, I think, writing history (one's self being the subject) is as amusing as reading that of foreign countries, at any time.

Sam, still more drunk than sober, arrived in due time with my portmanteau, and enabled me to put my dress into order, better befitting this temple of cleanliness and decorum, where (to conclude) I believe I shall be a sojourner for more days than one.*

P.S.—I have noted your adventure, as you home-bred youths may perhaps term it, concerning the visit of your doughty Laird. We travellers hold such an incident of no great consequence, though it may serve to embellish the uniform life of Brown's Square. But art thou not ashamed to attempt to interest one who is seeing the world at large, and studying human nature on a large scale, by so bald a narrative? Why, what does it amount to, after all, but that a Tory Laird dined with a Whig lawyer? no very uncommon matter,

* Note A.

especially as you state Mr. Herries to have lost the estate, though retaining the designation. The Laird behaves with haughtiness and impertinence—nothing out of character in that: Is *not* kicked down stairs, as he ought to have been, were Alan Fairford half the man that he would wish his friends to think him—Ay, but then, as the young lawyer, instead of shewing his friend the door, chose to make use of it himself, he overheard the Laird aforesaid ask the old lawyer concerning Darsie Latimer—no doubt earnestly inquiring after the handsome accomplished inmate of his family, who has so lately made Themis his bow, and declined the honour of following her farther. You laugh at me for my air-drawn castles; but confess, have they not surer footing, in general, than two words spoken by such a man as Herries? And yet—and yet—I would rally the matter off, Alan; but in dark nights, even the glow-worm becomes an object of lustre, and to one plunged in my uncertainty and ignorance, the slightest gleam that promises intelligence, is interesting. My life is like the subterranean river in the Peak of Derby, visible only where it crosses the celebrated cavern. I am here, and this much I know; but where I have sprung from, or whither my course of life is like to tend, who shall tell me? Your father, too, seemed interested and alarmed, and talked of writing; would to Heaven he may!—I send daily to the post-town for letters.

LETTER THE EIGHTH.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

THOU mayest clap thy wings and crow as thou pleasest. You go in search of adventures, but adventures come to me unsought for; and oh! in what a pleasing shape came mine, since it arrived in the form of a client—and a fair client to boot! What think you of that, Darsie! you who are such a sworn squire of dames? Will this not match my adventures with thine, that hunt salmon on horseback, and will it not, besides, eclipse the history of a whole tribe of Broadbrims?—but I must proceed methodically.

When I returned to-day from the College, I was surprised to see a broad grin distending the adust countenance of the faithful James Wilkinson, which, as the circumstance seldom happens above once a-year, was matter of some surprise. Moreover, he had a knowing glance with his eye, which I should have as soon expected from a dumb-waiter—an article of furniture to which James, in his usual state, may be happily assimilated. "What the devil is the matter, James?"

"The devil may be in the matter, for aught I ken," said James, with another provoking grin; "for here has been a woman calling for you, Maister Alan."

"A woman calling for me!" said I in surprise; for you know well, that excepting old Aunt Peggy, who comes to dinner of a Sunday, and the still older Lady Bedrooket, who calls ten times a-year for the quarterly payment of her jointure of four hundred merks, a female scarce approaches our threshold, as my father visits all his female clients at their own lodgings. James protested, however, that there had been a lady calling, and for me. "As bonny a lass as I have seen," added James, "since I was in the Fusileers, and kept company with Peg Baxter." Thou knowest all James's gay recollections go back to the period of his military service, the years he has spent in ours having probably been dull enough.

"Did the lady leave no name nor place of address?"

"No," replied James; "but she asked when ye wad be at hame, and I appointed her for twelve o'clock, when the house wad be quiet, and your father at the Bank."

"For shame, James! how can you think my father's being at home or abroad could be of consequence?—The lady is of course a decent person?"

"I'se uphaud her that, sir—she is nane of your *whew*"—[Here James supplied a blank with a low whistle]—"but I didna ken—my maister makes an unco wark if a woman comes here."

I passed into my own room, not ill-pleased that my father was absent, notwithstanding I had thought it proper to rebuke James for having so contrived it. I disarranged my books, to give them the appearance of

a graceful confusion on the table, and laying my foils (useless since your departure) across the mantelpiece, that the lady might see I was *tam Marte quam Mercurio*—I endeavoured to dispose my dress so as to resemble an elegant morning dishabille—gave my hair the general shade of powder which marks the gentleman—laid my watch and seals on the table, to hint that I understood the value of time;—and when I had made all these arrangements, of which I am a little ashamed when I think of them, I had nothing better to do than to watch the dial-plate till the index pointed to noon. Five minutes elapsed, which I allowed for variation of clocks—five minutes more rendered me anxious and doubtful—and five minutes more would have made me impatient.

Laugh as thou wilt; but remember, Darsie, I was a lawyer, expecting his first client—a young man, how strictly bred up I need not remind you, expecting a private interview with a young and beautiful woman. But ere the third term of five minutes had elapsed, the door-bell was heard to tinkle low and modestly, as if touched by some timid hand.

James Wilkinson, swift in nothing, is, as thou knowest, peculiarly slow in answering the door-bell; and I reckoned on five minutes good, ere his solemn step should have ascended the stair. Time enough, thought I, for a peep through the blinds, and was hastening to the window accordingly. But I reckoned without my host; for James, who had his own curiosity as well as I, was lying *perdu* in the lobby ready to open

at the first tinkle; and there was, "This way ma'am—Yes ma'am—The lady, Mr. Alan," before I could get to the chair in which I proposed to be discovered, seated in all legal dignity. The consciousness of being half caught in the act of peeping, joined to that native air of awkward bashfulness of which I am told the law will soon free me, kept me standing on the floor in some confusion; while the lady, disconcerted on her part, remained on the threshold of the room. James Wilkinson, who had his senses most about him, and was perhaps willing to prolong his stay in the apartment, busied himself in setting a chair for the lady, and recalled me to my good-breeding by the hint. I invited her to take possession of it, and bid James withdraw.

My visiter was undeniably a lady, and probably considerably above the ordinary rank—very modest, too, judging from the mixture of grace and timidity with which she moved, and at my entreaty sat down. Her dress was, I should suppose, both handsome and fashionable; but it was much concealed by a walking-cloak of green silk, fancifully embroidered; in which, though heavy for the season, her person was enveloped, and which, moreover, was furnished with a hood.

The devil take that hood, Darsie! for I was just able to distinguish that, pulled as it was over the face, it concealed from me, as I was convinced, one of the prettiest countenances I have seen, and which, from a sense of embarrassment, seemed to be crimsoned with a deep blush. I could see her complexion was beautiful—her chin finely turned—her lips coral—and her teeth

rivals to ivory. But further, the deponent sayeth not; for a clasp of gold, ornamented with a sapphire, closed the envious mantle under the incognita's throat, and the cursed hood concealed entirely the upper part of the face.

I ought to have spoke first, that is certain; but ere I could get my phrases well arranged, the young lady, rendered desperate, I suppose, by my hesitation, opened the conversation herself.

"I fear I am an intruder, sir—I expected to meet an elderly gentleman."

This brought me to myself. "My father, madam, perhaps. But you inquired for Alan Fairford—my father's name is Alexander."

"It is Mr. Alan Fairford, undoubtedly, with whom I wished to speak," she said, with greater confusion; "but I was told that he was advanced in life."

"Some mistake, madam, I presume, betwixt my father and myself—our Christian names have the same initials, though the terminations are different.—I—I—I would esteem it a most fortunate mistake if I could have the honour of supplying my father's place in any thing that could be of service to you."

"You are very obliging, sir." A pause, during which she seemed undetermined whether to rise or sit still.

"I am just about to be called to the bar, madam," said I, in hopes to remove her scruples to open her case to me; "and if my advice or opinion could be of the slightest use, although I cannot presume to say that they are much to be depended upon, yet——"

The lady arose. "I am truly sensible of your kindness, sir; and I have no doubt of your talents. I will be very plain with you—it *is* you whom I came to visit; although now that we have met, I find it will be much better that I should commit my communication to writing."

"I hope, madam, you will not be so cruel—so tantalizing, I would say. Consider, you are my first client—your business my first consultation—do not do me the displeasure of withdrawing your confidence because I am a few years younger than you seem to have expected—My attention shall make amends for my want of experience."

"I have no doubt of either," said the lady, in a grave tone, calculated to restrain the air of gallantry with which I had endeavoured to address her. "But when you have received my letter, you will find good reasons assigned why a written communication will best suit my purpose. I wish you, sir, a good morning." And she left the apartment, her poor baffled counsel scraping, and bowing, and apologising for any thing that might have been disagreeable to her, although the front of my offence seems to be my having been discovered to be younger than my father."

The door was opened—out she went—walked along the pavement, turned down the close, and put the sun, I believe, into her pocket when she disappeared, so suddenly did dulness and darkness sink down on the square, when she was no longer visible. I stood for a moment as if I had been senseless, not recollecting

what a fund of entertainment I must have supplied to our watchful friends on the other side of the green. Then it darted on my mind that I might dog her, and ascertain at least who or what she was. Off I set—ran down the close, where she was no longer to be seen, and demanded of one of the dyer's lads whether he had seen a lady go down the close, or had observed which way she turned.

"A leddy!" said the dyer, staring at me with his rainbow countenance. "Mr. Alan, what takes you out, rinning like daft, without your hat?"

"The devil take my hat!" answered I, running back, however, in quest of it; snatched it up, and again sallied forth. But as I reached the head of the close once more, I had sense enough to recollect that all pursuit would be now in vain. Besides, I saw my friend, the journeyman dyer, in close confabulation with a pea-green personage of his own profession, and was conscious, like Scrub, that they talked of me, because they laughed consumedly. I had no mind, by a second sudden appearance, to confirm the report that Advocate Fairford was "gaen daft," which had probably spread from Campbell's close-foot to the Mealmarket Stairs; and so slunk back within my own hole again.

My first employment was to remove all traces of that elegant and fanciful disposition of my effects, from which I had hoped for so much credit; for I was now ashamed and angry at having thought an instant upon the mode of receiving a visit which had commenced so agreeably, but terminated in a manner so unsatisfactory.

I put my folios in their places—threw the foils into the dressing-closet—tormenting myself all the while with the fruitless doubt, whether I had missed an opportunity or escaped a stratagem, or whether the young person had been really startled, as she seemed to intimate, by the extreme youth of her intended legal adviser. The mirror was not unnaturally called in to aid; and that cabinet-counsellor pronounced me rather short, thick-set, with a cast of features fitter, I trust, for the bar than the ball—not handsome enough for blushing virgins to pine for my sake, or even to invent sham cases to bring them to my chambers—yet not ugly enough either to scare those away who came on real business—dark, to be sure, but—*nigri sunt hyacinthi*—there are pretty things to be said in favour of that complexion.

At length—as common sense will get the better in all cases, when a man will but give it fair play—I began to stand convicted in my own mind, as an ass before the interview, for having expected too much—an ass during the interview, for having failed to extract the lady's real purpose—and an especial ass, now that it was over, for thinking so much about it. But I can think of nothing else, and therefore I am determined to think of this to some good purpose.

You remember Murtough O'Hara's defence of the Catholic doctrine of confession; because, "by his soul, his sins were always a great burden to his mind, till he had told them to the priest; and once confessed, he never thought more about them." I have tried his

receipt, therefore; and having poured my secret mortification into thy trusty ear, I will think no more about this maid of the mist,

"Who, with no face, as t'were, outfaced me."

——— four o'clock.

Plague on her green mantle, she can be nothing better than a fairy; she keeps possession of my head yet! All during dinner time I was terribly absent; but, luckily, my father gave the whole credit of my reverie to the abstract nature of the doctrine *Vinco vincentem, ergo vinco te;* upon which brocard of law the Professor this morning lectured. So I got an early dismissal to my own crib, and here am I studying, in one sense, *vincere vincentem*, to get the better of the silly passion of curiosity—I think—I think it amounts to nothing else—which has taken such possession of my imagination, and is perpetually worrying me with the question—will she write or no? She will not—she will not! So says Reason, and adds, Why should she take the trouble to enter into correspondence with one, who, instead of a bold, alert, prompt gallant, proved a chicken-hearted boy, and left her the whole awkwardness of explanation, which he should have met half-way? But then, says Fancy, she *will* write, for she was not a bit that sort of person whom you, Mr. Reason, in your wisdom, take her to be. She was disconcerted enough, without my adding to her distress by any impudent conduct on my part.

And she will write, for —— By Heaven, she HAS written, Darsie, and with a vengeance!—Here is her letter, thrown into the kitchen by a cadie, too faithful to be bribed, either by money or whisky, to say more than that he received it, with sixpence, from an ordinary-looking woman, as he was plying on his station near the Cross.

"FOR ALAN FAIRFORD, ESQUIRE, BARRISTER.

"SIR,

"Excuse my mistake of to-day. I had accidentally learned that Mr. Darsie Latimer had an intimate friend and associate in Mr. A. Fairford. When I inquired for such a person, he was pointed out to me at the Cross (as I think the Exchange of your city is called), in the character of a respectable elderly man—your father, as I now understand. On inquiry at Brown's Square, where I understood he resided, I used the full name of Alan, which naturally occasioned you the trouble of this day's visit. Upon further inquiry, I am led to believe that you are likely to be the person most active in the matter to which I am now about to direct your attention; and I regret much that circumstances, arising out of my own particular situation, prevent my communicating to you personally what I now apprise you of in this matter.

"Your friend, Mr. Darsie Latimer, is in a situation of considerable danger. You are doubtless aware, that he has been cautioned not to trust himself in England

—Now, if he has not absolutely transgressed this friendly injunction, he has at least approached as nearly to the menaced danger as he could do, consistently with the letter of the prohibition. He has chosen his abode in a neighbourhood very perilous to him; and it is only by a speedy return to Edinburgh, or at least by a removal to some more remote part of Scotland, that he can escape the machinations of those whose enmity he has to fear. I must speak in mystery, but my words are not the less certain; and, I believe, you know enough of your friend's fortunes to be aware, that I could not write this much without being even more intimate with them than you are.

"If he cannot, or will not, take the advice here given, it is my opinion that you should join him, if possible, without delay, and urge, by your personal presence and entreaty, the arguments which may prove ineffectual in writing. One word more, and I implore of your candour to take it as it is meant. No one supposes that Mr. Fairford's zeal in his friend's service, needs to be quickened by mercenary motives. But report says, that Mr. Alan Fairford not having yet entered on his professional career, may, in such a case as this, want the means, though he cannot want the inclination, to act with promptitude. The enclosed note, Mr. Alan Fairford must be pleased to consider as his first professional emolument; and she who sends it hopes it will be the omen of unbounded success, though the fee comes from a hand so unknown as that of

"GREEN MANTLE."

A bank note of £20 was the enclosure, and the whole incident left me speechless with astonishment. I am not able to read over the beginning of my own letter, which forms the introduction to this extraordinary communication. I only know that, though mixed with a quantity of foolery (God knows very much different from my present feelings), it gives an account sufficiently accurate, of the mysterious person from whom this letter comes, and that I have neither time nor patience to separate the absurd commentary from the text, which it is so necessary you should know.

Combine this warning, so strangely conveyed, with the caution impressed on you by your London correspondent, Griffiths, against your visiting England—with the character of your Laird of the Solway Lakes—with the lawless habits of the people on that frontier country, where warrants are not easily executed, owing to the jealousy entertained by either country of the legal interference of the other; remember, that even Sir John Fielding said to my father, that he could never trace a rogue beyond the Briggend of Dumfries—think that the distinctions of Whig and Tory, Papist and Protestant, still keep that country in a loose and comparatively lawless state—think of all this, my dearest Darsie, and remember that, while at this Mount Sharon of yours, you are residing with a family actually menaced with forcible interference, and who, while their obstinacy provokes violence, are by principle bound to abstain from resistance.

Nay, let me tell you, professionally, that the legality

of the mode of fishing practised by your friend Joshua, is greatly doubted by our best lawyers; and that, if the stake-nets be considered as actually an unlawful obstruction raised in the channel of the estuary, an assembly of persons who shall proceed, *via facti*, to pull down and destroy them, would not, in the eye of the law, be esteemed guilty of a riot. So, by remaining where you are, you are likely to be engaged in a quarrel with which you have nothing to do, and thus to enable your enemies, whoever these may be, to execute, amid the confusion of a general hubbub, whatever designs they may have against your personal safety. Black-fishers, poachers, and smugglers, are a sort of gentry that will not be much checked, either by your Quaker's texts, or by your chivalry. If you are Don Quixote enough to lay lance in rest, in defence of those of the stake-net, and of the sad-coloured garment, I pronounce you but a lost knight; for, as I said before, I doubt if these potent redressers of wrongs, the justices and constables, will hold themselves warranted to interfere. In a word, return, my dear Amadis; the adventure of the Solway-nets is not reserved for your worship. Come back, and I will be your faithful Sancho Panza upon a more hopeful quest. We will beat about together, in search of this Urganda, the Unknown She of the Green Mantle, who can read this, the riddle of thy fate, better than wise Eppie of Buckhaven,* or Cassandra herself.

* Well known in the Chap-Book, called the History of Buckhaven.

I would fain trifle, Darsie; for, in debating with you, jests will sometimes go farther than arguments; but I am sick at heart, and cannot keep the ball up. If you have a moment's regard for the friendship we have so often vowed to each other, let my wishes for once prevail over your own venturous and romantic temper. I am quite serious in thinking, that the information communicated to my father by this Mr. Herries, and the admonitory letter of the young lady, bear upon each other; and that, were you here, you might learn something from one or other, or from both, that might throw light on your birth and parentage. You will not, surely, prefer an idle whim to the prospect which is thus held out to you?

I would, agreeably to the hint I have received in the young lady's letter (for I am confident that such is her condition), have ere now been with you to urge these things, instead of pouring them out upon paper. But you know that the day for my trials is appointed; I have already gone through the form of being introduced to the examinators, and have gotten my titles assigned me. All this should not keep me at home, but my father would view any irregularity upon this occasion as a mortal blow to the hopes which he has cherished most fondly during his life; viz. my being called to the bar with some credit. For my own part, I know there is no great difficulty in passing these formal examinations, else how have some of our acquaintance got through them? But, to my father, these formalities compose an august and serious solemnity, to

which he has long looked forward, and my absenting myself at this moment would well-nigh drive him distracted. Yet I shall go altogether distracted myself, if I have not an instant assurance from you that you are hastening hither—Meanwhile I have desired Hannah to get your little crib into the best order possible. I cannot learn that my father has yet written to you; nor has he spoken more of his communication with Birrenswork; but when I let him have some inkling of the dangers you are at present incurring, I know my request that you will return immediately, will have his cordial support.

Another reason yet—I must give a dinner, as usual, upon my admission, to our friends; and my father, laying aside all his usual considerations of economy, has desired it may be in the best style possible. Come hither then, dear Darsie! or, I protest to you, I shall send examination, admission-dinner, and guests, to the devil, and come, in person, to fetch you with a vengeance. Thine, in much anxiety,

A. F.

LETTER THE NINTH.

ALEXANDER FAIRFORD, W.S., TO MR. DARSIE LATIMER.

DEAR MR. DARSIE,

Having been your *factor loco tutoris*, or rather, I ought to say, in correctness (since I acted without warrant from the Court), your *negotiorum gestor;* that connection occasions my present writing. And although

having rendered an account of my intromissions, which have been regularly approved of, not only by yourself (whom I could not prevail upon to look at more than the docket and sum total), but also by the worthy Mr. Samuel Griffiths of London, being the hand through whom the remittances were made, I may, in some sense, be considered as to you *functus officio;* yet, to speak facetiously, I trust you will not hold me accountable as a vicious intromitter, should I still consider myself as occasionally interested in your welfare. My motives for writing, at this time, are twofold.

I have met with a Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, a gentleman of very ancient descent, but who hath in time past been in difficulties, nor do I know if his affairs are yet well redd. Birrenswork says, that he believes he was very familiar with your father, whom he states to have been called Ralph Latimer of Langcote-Hall, in Westmoreland; and he mentioned family affairs, which it may be of the highest importance to you to be acquainted with; but as he seemed to decline communicating them to me, I could not civilly urge him thereanent. Thus much I know, that Mr. Herries had his own share in the late desperate and unhappy matter of 1745, and was in trouble about it, although that is probably now over. Moreover, although he did not profess the Popish religion openly, he had an eye that way. And both of these are reasons why I have hesitated to recommend him to a youth who maybe hath not altogether so well founded his opinions concerning Kirk and State, that they might not be changed

by some sudden wind of doctrine. For I have observed ye, Master Darsie, to be rather tinctured with the old leaven of prelacy—this under your leave; and although God forbid that you should be in any manner disaffected to the Protestant Hanoverian line, yet ye have ever loved to hear the blawing, blazing stories which the Hieland gentlemen tell of those troublous times, which, if it were their will, they had better pretermit, as tending rather to shame than to honour. It is come to me also by a side-wind, as I may say, that you have been neighbouring more than was needful among some of the pestilent sect of Quakers—a people who own neither priest, nor king, nor civil magistrate, nor the fabric of our law, and will not depone either *in civilibus* or *criminalibus*, be the loss to the lieges what it may. Anent which heresies, it were good ye read "the Snake in the Grass," or "the Foot out of the Snare," being both well-approved tracts, touching these doctrines.

Now, Mr. Darsie, ye are to judge for yourself whether ye can safely to your soul's weal remain longer among these Papists and Quakers; these defections on the right hand, and fallings away on the left; and truly if you can confidently resist these evil examples of doctrine, I think ye may as well tarry in the bounds where ye are until you see Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, who does assuredly know more of your matters than I thought had been communicated to any man in Scotland. I would fain have precognosced him myself on

these affairs, but found him unwilling to speak out, as I have partly intimated before.

To call a new cause—I have the pleasure to tell you, that Alan has passed his private Scots Law examinations with good approbation—a great relief to my mind; especially as worthy Mr. Pest told me in my ear there was no fear of the "callant," as he familiarly called him, which gives me great heart. His public trials, which are nothing in comparison save a mere form, are to take place, by order of the Honourable Dean of Faculty, on Wednesday first; and on Friday he puts on the gown, and gives a bit chack of dinner to his friends and acquaintances, as is, you know, the custom. Your company will be wished for there, Master Darsie, by more than him, which I regret to think is impossible to have, as well by your engagements, as that our cousin, Peter Fairford, comes from the west on purpose, and we have no place to offer him but your chamber in the wall. And, to be plain with you, after my use and wont, Master Darsie, it may be as well that Alan and you do not meet till he is hefted as it were to his new calling. You are a pleasant gentleman, and full of daffing, which may well become you, as you have enough (as I understand) to uphold your merry humour. If you regard the matter wisely, you would perchance consider that a man of substance should have a douce and staid demeanour; yet you are so far from growing grave and considerate with the increase of your annual income, that the richer you become, the merrier I think you grow. But this must be at your own pleasure, so far as

you are concerned. Alan, however (overpassing my small savings), has the world to win; and louping and laughing, as you and he were wont to do, would soon make the powder flee out of his wig, and the pence out of his pocket. Nevertheless, I trust you will meet when you return from your rambles; for there is a time, as the wise man sayeth, for gathering, and a time for casting away; it is always the part of a man of sense to take the gathering time first. I remain, dear sir, your well-wishing friend, and obedient to command,

ALEXANDER FAIRFORD.

P. S.—Alan's Thesis is upon the title *De periculo et commodo rei venditæ*, and is a very pretty piece of Latinity.—Ross-House, in our neighbourhood, is nearly finished, and is thought to excel Duff House in ornature.

LETTER THE TENTH.

DARSIE LATIMER TO ALAN FAIRFORD.

THE plot thickens, Alan. I have your letter, and also one from your father. The last makes it impossible for me to comply with the kind request which the former urges. No—I cannot be with you, Alan; and that, for the best of all reasons—I cannot and ought not to counteract your father's anxious wishes. I do not take it unkind of him that he desires my absence. It is natural that he should wish for his son, what his son so well deserves—the advantage of a wiser and steadier companion than I seem to him. And yet I am sure I have often laboured hard enough to acquire that decency of demeanour which can no more be suspected of breaking bounds, than an owl of catching a butterfly.

But it was in vain that I have knitted my brows till I had the headach, in order to acquire the reputation of a grave, solid, and well-judging youth. Your father always has discovered, or thought that he discovered, a harebrained eccentricity lying folded among the wrinkles of my forehead, which rendered me a perilous associate for the future counsellor and ultimate judge. Well, Corporal Nym's philosophy must be my

comfort—"Things must be as they may."—I cannot come to your father's house, where he wishes not to see me; and as to your coming hither,—by all that is dear to me, I vow that if you are guilty of such a piece of reckless folly—not to say undutiful cruelty, considering your father's thoughts and wishes—I will never speak to you again as long as I live! I am perfectly serious. And besides, your father, while he in a manner prohibits me from returning to Edinburgh, gives me the strongest reasons for continuing a little while longer in this country, by holding out the hope that I may receive from your old friend, Mr. Herries of Birrenswork, some particulars concerning my origin, with which that ancient recusant seems to be acquainted.

That gentleman mentioned the name of a family in Westmoreland, with which he supposes me connected. My inquiries here after such a family have been ineffectual, for the borderers, on either side, know little of each other. But I shall doubtless find some English person of whom to make inquiries, since the confounded fetterlock clapped on my movements by old Griffiths, prevents me repairing to England in person. At least, the prospect of obtaining some information is greater here than elsewhere; it will be an apology for my making a longer stay in this neighbourhood, a line of conduct which seems to have your father's sanction, whose opinion must be sounder than that of your wandering damoselle.

If the road were paved with dangers which leads to

such a discovery, I cannot for a moment hesitate to tread it. But in fact there is no peril in the case. If the Tritons of the Solway shall proceed to pull down honest Joshua's tide-nets, I am neither Quixote enough in disposition, nor Goliath enough in person, to attempt their protection. I have no idea of attempting to prop a falling house, by putting my shoulders against it. And indeed Joshua gave me a hint, that the company which he belongs to, injured in the way threatened (some of them being men who thought after the fashion of the world), would pursue the rioters at law, and recover damages, in which probably his own ideas of non-resistance will not prevent his participating. Therefore the whole affair will take its course as law will, as I only mean to interfere when it may be necessary to direct the course of the plaintiffs to thy chambers; and I request they may find thee intimate with all the Scottish statutes concerning salmon-fisheries, from the *Lex Aquarum*, downward.

As for the Lady of the Mantle, I will lay a wager that the sun so bedazzled thine eyes on that memorable morning, that everything thou didst look upon seemed green; and notwithstanding James Wilkinson's experience in the fusileers, as well as his negative whistle, I will venture to hold a crown that she is but a what-shall-call-'um after all. Let not even the gold persuade you to the contrary. She may make a shift to cause you to disgorge that, and (immense spoil!) a session's fees to boot, if you look not all the sharper about you. Or if it should be otherwise, and if indeed there lurk

some mystery under this visitation, credit me, it is one which thou canst not penetrate, nor can I as yet even attempt to explain it; since, if I prove mistaken, and mistaken I may easily be, I would be fain to creep into Phalaris's bull, were it standing before me ready heated, rather than be roasted with thy raillery. Do not tax me with want of confidence; for the instant I can throw any light on the matter thou shalt have it; but while I am only blundering about in the dark, I do not choose to call wise folks to see me, perchance, break my nose against a post. So if you marvel at this,

"E'en marvel on till time makes all things plain."

In the meantime, kind Alan, let me proceed in my diurnal.

On the third or fourth day after my arrival at Mount Sharon, Time, that bald sexton to whom I have just referred you, did certainly limp more heavily along with me than he had done at first. The quaint morality of Joshua, and Huguenot simplicity of his sister, began to lose much of their raciness with their novelty, and my mode of life, by dint of being very quiet, began to feel abominably dull. It was, as thou say'st, as if the Quakers had put the sun in their pockets—all around was soft and mild, and even pleasant; but there was, in the whole routine, a uniformity, a want of interest, a helpless and hopeless languor, which rendered life insipid. No doubt, my worthy host and hostess felt none of this void, this want of excitation, which was becoming oppressive to their guest. They had their

little round of occupations, charities and pleasures; Rachel had her poultry-yard and conservatory, and Joshua his garden. Besides this, they enjoyed, doubtless, their devotional meditations; and, on the whole, time glided softly and imperceptibly on with them, though to me, who long for stream and cataract, it seemed absolutely to stand still. I meditated returning to Shepherd's Bush, and began to think, with some hankering, after little Benjie and the rod. The imp has ventured hither, and hovers about to catch a peep of me now and then; I suppose the little sharper is angling for a few more sixpences. But this would have been, in Joshua's eyes, a return of the washed sow to wallowing in the mire, and I resolved, while I remained his guest, to spare him so violent a shock to his prejudices. The next point was, to shorten the time of my proposed stay; but, alas! that I felt to be equally impossible. I had named a week; and however rashly my promise had been pledged, it must be held sacred, even according to the letter, from which the Friends permit no deviation.

All these considerations wrought me up to a kind of impatience yesterday evening; so that I snatched up my hat, and prepared for a sally beyond the cultivated farm and ornamented grounds of Mount Sharon, just as if I were desirous to escape from the realms of art, into those of free and unconstrained nature.

I was scarcely more delighted when I first entered this peaceful demesne, than I now was—such is the instability and inconsistency of human nature!—when

I escaped from it to the open downs, which had formerly seemed so waste and dreary. The air I breathed felt purer and more bracing. The clouds, riding high upon a summer breeze, drove, in gay succession, over my head, now obscuring the sun, now letting its rays stream in transient flashes upon various parts of the landscape, and especially upon the broad mirror of the distant Firth of Solway.

I advanced on the scene with the light step of a liberated captive; and, like John Bunyan's Pilgrim, could have found in my heart to sing as I went on my way. It seemed as if my gaiety had accumulated while suppressed, and that I was, in my present joyous mood, entitled to expend the savings of the previous week. But just as I was about to uplift a merry stave, I heard, to my joyful surprise, the voices of three or more choristers, singing, with considerable success, the lively old catch,

"For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking:
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belonged to old Sir Thom o' Lyne:
As they went to the ferry, they were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking."*

As the chorus ended, there followed a loud and hearty laugh by way of cheers. Attracted by sounds

* The original of this catch is to be found in Cowley's witty comedy of the Guardian, the first edition. It does not exist in the second and revised edition, called the Cutter of Coleman Street.

which were so congenial to my present feelings, I made towards the spot from which they came,—cautiously however, for the downs, as had been repeatedly hinted to me, had no good name; and the attraction of the music, without rivalling that of the sirens in melody, might have been followed by similarly inconvenient consequences to an incautious amateur.

I crept on, therefore, trusting that the sinuosities of the ground, broken as it was into knolls and sand-pits, would permit me to obtain a sight of the musicians before I should be observed by them. As I advanced, the old ditty was again raised. The voices seemed those of a man and two boys; they were rough, but kept good time, and were managed with too much skill to belong to the ordinary country people.

"Jack looked at the sun, and cried, Fire, fire, fire;
Tom stabled his keffel in Birkendale mire;
Jem started a calf, and halloo'd for a stag;
Will mounted a gate-post instead of his nag;

"CAPTAIN BLADE. Ha, ha, boys, another catch.

And all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking.

CUTTER. *One man of mine.*
DOGREL. *Two men of mine.*
BLADE. *Three men of mine.*
CUTTER. *And one man of mine*
OMNES. *As we went by the way we were drunk, drunk, damnably drunk,*
And all our men were very very merry, etc."

Such are the words, which are somewhat altered and amplified in the text. The play was acted in presence of Charles II., then Prince of Wales, in 1641. The catch in the text has been happily set to music.

For all our men were very very merry,
And all our men were drinking;
There were two men of mine,
Three men of thine,
And three that belonged to old Sir Thom o' Lyne:
As they went to the ferry, they were very very merry,
For all our men were drinking."

The voices, as they mixed in their several parts, and ran through them, untwisting and again entwining all the links of the merry old catch, seemed to have a little touch of the bacchanalian spirit which they celebrated, and shewed plainly that the musicians were engaged in the same joyous revel as the *menyie* of old Sir Thom o' Lyne. At length I came within sight of them, three in number, where they sat cosily niched into what you might call a *bunker*, a little sand-pit, dry and snug, and surrounded by its banks, and a screen of whins in full bloom.

The only one of the trio whom I recognised as a personal acquaintance was the notorious little Benjie, who, having just finished his stave, was cramming a huge luncheon of pie-crust into his mouth with one hand, while in the other he held a foaming tankard, his eyes dancing with all the glee of a forbidden revel; and his features, which have at all times a mischievous archness of expression, confessing the full sweetness of stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret.

There was no mistaking the profession of the male and female, who were partners with Benjie in these merry doings. The man's long loose-bodied great-coat (wrap-rascal as the vulgar term it), the fiddle-case, with

its straps, which lay beside him, and a small knapsack which might contain his few necessaries; a clear gray eye; features which, in contending with many a storm, had not lost a wild and careless expression of glee, animated at present, when he was exercising for his own pleasure the arts which he usually practised for bread,—all announced one of these peripatetic followers of Orpheus, whom the vulgar call a strolling fiddler. Gazing more attentively, I easily discovered that though the poor musician's eyes were open, their sense was shut, and that the ecstasy with which he turned them up to Heaven, only derived its apparent expression from his own internal emotions, but received no assistance from the visible objects around. Beside him sat his female companion, in a man's hat, a blue coat, which seemed also to have been an article of male apparel, and a red petticoat. She was cleaner, in person and in clothes, than such itinerants generally are; and, having been in her day a strapping *bona roba*, she did not even yet neglect some attention to her appearance; wore a large amber necklace, and silver ear-rings, and had her plaid fastened across her breast with a brooch of the same metal.

The man also looked clean, notwithstanding the meanness of his attire, and had a decent silk handkerchief well knotted about his throat, under which peeped a clean owerlay. His beard, also, instead of displaying a grizzly stubble, unmowed for several days, flowed in thick and comely abundance over the breast, to the length of six inches, and mingled with his hair, which

was but beginning to exhibit a touch of age. To sum up his appearance, the loose garment which I have described, was secured around him by a large old-fashioned belt, with brass studs, in which hung a dirk, with a knife and fork, its usual accompaniments. Altogether, there was something more wild and adventurous-looking about the man, than I could have expected to see in an ordinary modern crowder; and the bow which he now and then drew across the violin, to direct his little choir, was decidedly that of no ordinary performer.

You must understand, that many of these observations were the fruits of after remark; for I had scarce approached so near as to get a distinct view of the party, when my friend Benjie's lurching attendant, which he calls by the appropriate name of Hemp, began to cock his tail and ears, and, sensible of my presence, flew, barking like a fury, to the place where I had meant to lie concealed till I heard another song. I was obliged, however, to jump on my feet, and intimidate Hemp, who would otherwise have bit me, by two sound kicks on the ribs, which sent him howling back to his master.

Little Benjie seemed somewhat dismayed at my appearance; but, calculating on my placability, and remembering, perhaps, that the ill-used Solomon was no palfrey of mine, he speedily affected great glee, and almost in one breath assured the itinerants that I was "a grand gentleman, and had plenty of money, and was very kind to poor folk;" and informed me that this

was "Willie Steenson—Wandering Willie—the best fiddler that ever kittled thairm with horse-hair."

The woman rose and courtesied; and Wandering Willie sanctioned his own praises with a nod, and the ejaculation, "All is true that the little boy says."

I asked him if he was of this country.

"*This* country!" replied the blind man—"I am of every country in broad Scotland, and a wee bit of England to the boot. But yet I am, in some sense, of this country; for I was born within hearing of the roar of Solway. Will I give your honour a touch of the auld bread-winner?"

He preluded as he spoke, in a manner which really excited my curiosity; and then taking the old tune of Galashiels for his theme, he graced it with a number of wild, complicated, and beautiful variations; during which, it was wonderful to observe how his sightless face was lighted up under the conscious pride and heartfelt delight in the exercise of his own very considerable powers.

"What think you of that, now, for threescore and twa?"

I expressed my surprise and pleasure.

"A rant, man—an auld rant," said Willie; "naething like the music ye hae in your ball-houses and your playhouses in Edinbro'; but it's weel aneugh anes in a way at a dike-side.—Here's another—it's no a Scots tune, but it passes for ane—Oswald made it himsell, I reckon—he has cheated mony ane, but he canna cheat Wandering Willie."

He then played your favourite air of Roslin Castle, with a number of beautiful variations, some of which I am certain were almost extempore.

"You have another fiddle there, my friend," said I —"Have you a comrade?" But Willie's ears were deaf, or his attention was still busied with the tune.

The female replied in his stead, "O ay, sir—troth we have a partner—a gangrel body like oursells. No but my hinny might have been better if he had liked; for mony a bein nook in mony a braw house has been offered to my hinny Willie, if he wad but just bide still and play to the gentles."

"Whisht, woman! whisht!" said the blind man, angrily, shaking his locks; "dinna deave the gentleman wi' your havers. Stay in a house and play to the gentles!—strike up when my leddy pleases, and lay down the bow when my lord bids! Na, na, that's nae life for Willie.—Look out, Maggie—peer out, woman, and see if ye can see Robin coming.—Deil be in him! he has got to the lea-side of some smuggler's punch-bowl, and he wunna budge the night, I doubt."

"That is your consort's instrument," said I—"Will you give me leave to try my skill?" I slipped at the same time a shilling into the woman's hand.

"I dinna ken whether I dare trust Robin's fiddle to ye," said Willie, bluntly. His wife gave him a twitch. "Hout awa, Maggie," he said, in contempt of the hint; "though the gentleman may hae gien ye siller, he may have nae bow hand for a' that, and I'll no trust Robin's fiddle wi' an ignoramus.—But that's no sae muckle

amiss," he added, as I began to touch the instrument; "I am thinking ye have some skill o' the craft."

To confirm him in this favourable opinion, I began to execute such a complicated flourish as I thought must have turned Crowdero into a pillar of stone with envy and wonder. I scaled the top of the finger-board, to dive at once to the bottom—skipped with flying fingers, like Timotheus, from shift to shift—struck arpeggios and harmonic tones, but without exciting any of the astonishment which I had expected.

Willie indeed listened to me with considerable attention; but I was no sooner finished, than he immediately mimicked on his own instrument the fantastic complication of tones which I had produced, and made so whimsical a parody of my performance, that, although somewhat angry, I could not help laughing heartily, in which I was joined by Benjie, whose reverence for me held him under no restraint; while the poor dame, fearful, doubtless, of my taking offence at this familiarity, seemed divided betwixt her conjugal reverence for her Willie, and her desire to give him a hint for his guidance.

At length the old man stopped of his own accord, and, as if he had sufficiently rebuked me by his mimicry, he said, "But for a' that, ye will play very weel wi' a little practice and some gude teaching. But ye maun learn to put the heart into it, man—to put the heart into it."

I played an air in simpler taste, and received more decided approbation.

"That's something like it, man. Od, ye are a clever birkie!"

The woman touched his coat again. "The gentleman is a gentleman. Willie—ye maunna speak that gate to him, hinnie."

"The deevil I maunna!" said Willie; "and what for maunna I?—If he was ten gentles, he canna draw a bow like me, can he?"

"Indeed I cannot, my honest friend," said I; "and if you will go with me to a house hard by, I would be glad to have a night with you."

Here I looked round, and observed Benjie smothering a laugh, which I was sure had mischief in it. I seized him suddenly by the ear, and made him confess that he was laughing at the thoughts of the reception which a fiddler was likely to get from the Quakers at Mount Sharon. I chucked him from me, not sorry that his mirth had reminded me in time of what I had for the moment forgotten; and invited the itinerant to go with me to Shepherd's Bush, from which I proposed to send word to Mr. Geddes that I should not return home that evening. But the minstrel declined this invitation also. He was engaged for the night, he said, to a dance in the neighbourhood, and vented a round execration on the lazinesss or drunkenness of his comrade, who had not appeared at the place of rendezvous.

"I will go with you instead of him," said I, in a sudden whim; "and I will give you a crown to introduce me as your comrade."

"*You* gang instead of Rob the Rambler! My certie, freend, ye are no blate!" answered Wandering Willie, in a tone which announced death to my frolic.

But Maggie, whom the offer of the crown had not escaped, began to open on that scent with a maundering sort of lecture. "O Willie! hinny Willie, whan will ye learn to be wise? There's a crown to be win for naething but saying ae man's name instead of anither. And, wae's me! I hae just a shilling of this gentleman's gieing, and a bodle of my ain; and ye wunna bend your will sae muckle as to take up the siller that's flung at your feet! Ye will die the death of a cadger's powny in a wreath of drift! and what can I do better than lie down and die wi' you? for ye winna let me win siller to keep either you or mysell leevin."

"Haud your nonsense tongue, woman," said Willie, but less absolutely than before. "Is he a real gentleman, or ane of the player-men?"

"I'se uphaud him a real gentleman," said the woman.

"I'se uphaud ye ken little of the matter," said Willie; "let us see haud of your hand, neebor, gin ye like."

I gave him my hand. He said to himself, "Ay, ay, here are fingers that have seen canny service." Then running his hand over my hair, my face, and my dress, he went on with his soliloquy; "Ay, ay, muisted hair, braidclaith o' the best, and seenteen hundred linen on his back, at the least o' it.—And how do you think,

my braw birkie, that ye are to pass for a tramping fiddler?"

"My dress is plain," said I,—indeed I had chosen my most ordinary suit, out of compliment to my Quaker friends,—"and I can easily pass for a young farmer out upon a frolic. Come, I will double the crown I promised you."

"Damn your crowns!" said the disinterested man of music. I would like to have a round wi' you, that's certain;—but a farmer, and with a hand that never held pleugh-stilt or pettle, that will never do. Ye may pass for a trades-lad from Dumfries, or a student upon the ramble, or the like o' that.—But hark ye, lad; if ye expect to be ranting amang the queans o' lasses where ye are gaun, ye will come by the waur, I can tell ye; for the fishers are wild chaps, and will bide nae taunts."

I promised to be civil and cautious; and, to smooth the good woman, I slipped the promised piece into her hand. The acute organs of the blind man detected this little manœuvre.

"Are ye at it again wi' the siller, ye jaud? I'll be sworn ye wad rather hear ae twalpenny clink against another, than have a spring from Rory Dall,* if he was coming alive again anes errand. Gang doun the gate to Lucky Grégson's, and get the things ye want, and bide there till ele'en hours in the morn; and if ye see Robin, send him on to me."

"Am I no gaun to the ploy, then?" said Maggie, in a disappointed tone.

* Blind Rorie, a famous musician according to tradition.

"And what for should ye?" said her lord and master; "to dance a' night, I'se warrant, and no to be fit to walk your tae's length the morn, and we have ten Scots miles afore us? Na, na. Stable the steed, and pit your wife to bed, when there's night wark to do."

"Aweel, aweel, Willie hinnie, ye ken best; but O, take an unco care o' yoursell, and mind ye hae nae the blessing o' sight."

"Your tongue gars me whiles tire of the blessing of hearing, woman," replied Willie, in answer to this tender exhortation.

But I now put in for my interest. "Hollo, good folks, remember that I am to send the boy to Mount Sharon, and if you go to the Shepherd's Bush, honest woman, how the deuce am I to guide the blind man where he is going? I know little or nothing of the country."

"And ye ken mickle less of my hinnie, sir," replied Maggie, "that think he needs ony guiding; he's the best guide himsell, that ye'll find between Criffell and Carlisle. Horse-road and foot-path, parish-road and kirk-road, high-road and cross-road, he kens ilka foot of ground in Nithsdale."

"Ay, ye might have said in braid Scotland, gude-wife," added the fiddler. "But gang your ways Maggie, that's the first wise word ye hae spoke the day. I wish it was dark night, and rain and wind, for the gentleman's sake, that I might shew him there is whiles when ane had better want een than have them; for I am as true a guide by darkness as by daylight."

Internally as well pleased that my companion was not put to give me this last proof of his skill, I wrote a note with a pencil, desiring Samuel to bring my horses at midnight, when I thought my frolic would be well-nigh over, to the place to which the bearer should direct him, and I sent little Benjie with an apology to the worthy Quakers.

As we parted in different directions, the good woman said, "Oh, sir, if ye wad but ask Willie to tell ye ane of his tales to shorten the gate! He can speak like ony minister frae the pu'pit, and he might have been a minister himsell, but——"

"Haud your tongue, ye fule!" said Willie,—"But stay, Meg—gie me a kiss, we maunna part in anger, neither."—And thus our society separated.*

* It is certain that in many cases the blind have, by constant exercise of their other organs, learned to overcome a defect which one would think incapable of being supplied. Every reader must remember the celebrated Blind Jack of Knaresborough, who lived by laying out roads.

LETTER THE ELEVENTH.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

You are now to conceive us proceeding in our different directions across the bare downs. Yonder flies little Benjie to the northward, with Hemp scampering at his heels, both running as if for dear life, so long as the rogue is within sight of his employer, and certain to take the walk very easy, so soon as he is out of ken.

Stepping westward, you see Maggie's tall form and high-crowned hat, relieved by the fluttering of her plaid upon the left shoulder, darkening as the distance diminishes her size, and as the level sunbeams begin to sink upon the sea. She is taking her quiet journey to the Shepherd's Bush.

Then, stoutly striding over the lea, you have a full view of Darsie Latimer, with his new acquaintance, Wandering Willie, who, bating that he touched the ground now and then with his staff, not in a doubtful groping manner, but with the confident air of an experienced pilot, heaving the lead when he has the soundings by heart, walks as firmly and boldly as if he possessed the eyes of Argus. There they go, each with his violin slung at his back, but one of them at least totally ignorant whither their course is directed.

And wherefore did you enter so keenly into such a mad frolic? says my wise counsellor—Why, I think, upon the whole, that as a sense of loneliness, and a longing for that kindness which is interchanged in society, led me to take up my temporary residence at Mount Sharon, the monotony of my life there, the quiet simplicity of the conversation of the Geddeses, and the uniformity of their amusements and employments, wearied out my impatient temper, and prepared me for the first escapade which chance might throw in my way.

What would I have given that I could have procured that solemn grave visage of thine, to dignify this joke, as it has done full many a one of thine own!

Thou hast so happy a knack of doing the most foolish things in the wisest manner, that thou mightst pass thy extravagances for rational actions, even in the eyes of Prudence herself.

From the direction which my guide observed, I began to suspect that the dell at Brokenburn was our probable destination; and it became important to me to consider whether I could, with propriety, or even perfect safety, intrude myself again upon the hospitality of my former host. I therefore asked Willie, whether we were bound for the Laird's, as folk called him.

"Do ye ken the Laird?" said Willie, interrupting a sonata of Corelli, of which he had whistled several bars with great precision.

"I know the Laird a little," said I; "and therefore, I was doubting whether I ought to go to his town in disguise.

"And I should doubt, not a little only, but a great deal, before I took ye there, my chap," said Wandering Willie; "for I am thinking it wad be worth little less than broken banes baith to you and me. Na, na, chap, we are no ganging to the Laird's, but to a blithe birling at the Brokenburn-foot, where there will be mony a braw lad and lass; and maybe there may be some of the Laird's folks, for he never comes to sic splores himsell. He is all for fowling-piece and salmon-spear, now that pike and musket are out of the question."

"He has been a soldier, then?" said I.

"I'se warrant him a soger," answered Willie; "but

take my advice, and speer as little about him as he does about you. Best to let sleeping dogs lie. Better say naething about the Laird, my man, and tell me instead, what sort of a chap ye are, that are sae ready to cleik in with an auld gaberlunzie fiddler? Maggie says ye're gentle, but a shilling maks a' the difference that Maggie kens, between a gentle and a semple, and your crowns wad mak ye a prince of the blood in her een. But I am ane that ken full weel that ye may wear good claithes, and have a saft hand, and yet that may come of idleness as weel as gentrice."

I told him my name, with the same addition I had formerly given to Mr. Joshua Geddes; that I was a law-student, tired of my studies, and rambling about for exercise and amusement.

"And are ye in the wont of drawing up wi' a' the gangrel bodies that ye meet on the high-road, or find cowering in a sand-bunker upon the links?" demanded Willie.

"Oh no; only with honest folks like yourself, Willie," was my reply.

"Honest folks like me!—How do ye ken whether I am honest, or what I am?—I may be the deevil himsell for what ye ken; for he has power to come disguised like an angel of light; and besides he is a prime fiddler. He played a sonata to Corelli, ye ken."

There was something odd in this speech, and the tone in which it was said. It seemed as if my companion was not always in his constant mind, or that he was willing to try if he could frighten me. I laughed

at the extravagance of his language, however, and asked him in reply, if he was fool enough to believe that the foul fiend would play so silly a masquerade.

"Ye ken little about it—little about it," said the old man, shaking his head and beard, and knitting his brows—"I could tell ye something about that."

What his wife mentioned of his being a tale-teller, as well as a musician, now occurred to me; and as you know I like tales of superstition, I begged to have a specimen of his talent as we went along.

"It is very true," said the blind man, "that when I am tired of scraping thairm or singing ballants, I whiles mak a tale serve the turn amang the country bodies; and I have some fearsome anes, that make the auld carlines shake on the settle, and the bits o' bairns skirl on their minnies out frae their beds. But this that I am gaun to tell you was a thing that befell in our ain house in my father's time—that is, my father was then a hafflins callant; and I tell it to you, that it may be a lesson to you, that are but a young, thoughtless chap, wha ye draw up wi' on a lonely road; for muckle was the dool and care that came o't to my gudesire."

He commenced his tale accordingly, in a distinct narrative tone of voice, which he raised and depressed with considerable skill; at times sinking almost into a whisper, and turning his clear but sightless eyeballs upon my face, as if it had been possible for him to witness the impression which his narrative made upon my features. I will not spare you a syllable of it, although it be of the longest; so I make a dash——and begin

Wandering Willie's Tale.

Ye maun have heard of Sir Robert Redgauntlet of that Ilk, who lived in these parts before the dear years. The country will lang mind him; and our fathers used to draw breath thick if ever they heard him named. He was out wi' the Hielandmen in Montrose's time; and again he was in the hills wi' Glencairn in the saxteen hundred and fifty-twa; and sae when King Charles the Second came in, wha was in sic favour as the Laird of Redgauntlet? He was knighted at Lonon court, wi' the King's ain sword; and being a redhot prelatist, he came down here, rampauging like a lion, with commissions of lieutenancy (and of lunacy, for what I ken), to put down a' the Whigs and Covenanters in the country. Wild wark they made of it; for the Whigs were as dour as the Cavaliers were fierce, and it was which should first tire the other. Redgauntlet was aye for the strong hand; and his name is kend as wide in the country as Claverhouse's or Tam Dalyell's. Glen, nor dargle, nor mountain, nor cave, could hide the puir hill-folk when Redgauntlet was out with bugle and bloodhound after them, as if they had been sae mony deer. And troth when they fand them, they didna mak muckle mair ceremony than a Hielandman wi' a roebuck—It was just, "Will ye tak the test?"—if not, "Make ready—present—fire!"—and there lay the recusant.

Far and wide was Sir Robert hated and feared. Men thought he had a direct compact with Satan—that

he was proof against steel—and that bullets happed aff his buff-coat like hailstanes from a hearth—that he had a mear that would turn a hare on the side of Carrifragawns*—and muckle to the same purpose, of whilk mair anon. The best blessing they wared on him was, "Deil scoup wi' Redgauntlet!" He wasna a bad master to his ain folk, though, and was weel aneugh liked by his tenants; and as for the lackies and troopers that raid out wi' him to the persecutions, as the Whigs caa'd those killing times, they wad hae drunken themsells blind to his health at ony time.

Now you are to ken that my gudesire lived on Redgauntlet's grund—they ca' the place Primrose-Knowe. We had lived on the grund, and under the Redgauntlets, since the riding days, and lang before. It was a pleasant bit; and I think the air is callerer and fresher there than onywhere else in the country. It's a' deserted now; and I sat on the broken door-cheek three days since, and was glad I couldna see the plight the place was in; but that's a' wide o' the mark. There dwelt my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, a rambling, rattling chiel' he had been in his young days, and could play weel on the pipes; he was famous at "Hoopers and Girders"—a' Cumberland couldna touch him at "Jockie Lattin"—and he had the finest finger for the backlilt between Berwick and Carlisle. The like o' Steenie wasna the sort that they made Whigs o'. And so he became a Tory, as they ca' it, which we now ca' Jacobites, just out of a kind of needcessity, that he

* A precipitous side of a mountain in Moffatdale.

might belang to some side or other. He had nae ill-will to the Whig bodies, and liked little to see the blude rin, though, being obliged to follow Sir Robert in hunting and hosting, watching and warding, he saw muckle mischief, and maybe did some, that he couldna avoid.

Now Steenie was a kind of favourite with his master, and kend a' the folks about the castle, and was often sent for to play the pipes when they were at their merriment. Auld Dougal MacCallum, the butler, that had followed Sir Robert through gude and ill, thick and thin, pool and stream, was specially fond of the pipes, and aye gae my gudesire his gude word wi' the Laird; for Dougal could turn his master round his finger.

Weel round came the Revolution, and it had like to have broken the hearts baith of Dougal and his master. But the change was not a'thegither sae great as they feared, and other folk thought for. The Whigs made an unca crawing what they would do with their auld enemies, and in special wi' Sir Robert Redgauntlet. But there were ower mony great folks dipped in the same doings, to mak a spick and span new warld. So Parliament passed it a' ower easy; and Sir Robert, bating that he was held to hunting foxes instead of Covenanters, remained just the man he was. His revel was as loud, and his hall as weel lighted, as ever it had been, though maybe he lacked the fines of the non-conformists, that used to come to stock his larder and cellar; for it is certain he began to be keener about the

rents than his tenants used to find him before, and they behoved to be prompt to the rent-day, or else the Laird wasna pleased. And he was sic an awsome body, that naebody cared to anger him; for the oaths he swore, and the rage that he used to get into, and the looks that he put on, made men sometimes think him a devil incarnate.*

Weel, my gudesire was nae manager—no that he was a very great misguider—but he hadna the saving gift, and he got twa terms' rent in arrear. He got the first brash at Whitsunday put ower wi' fair word and piping? but when Martinmas came, there was a summons from the grund-officer to come wi' the rent on a day preceese, or else Steenie behoved to flitt. Sair wark he had to get the siller; but he was weel-freended, and at last he got the haill scraped thegether—a thousand merks—the maist of it was from a neighbour they ca'd Laurie Lapraik—a sly tod. Laurie had walth o' gear—could hunt wi' the hound and rin wi' the hare—and be Whig or Tory, saunt or sinner, as the wind stood. He was a professor in this Revolution warld, but he liked an orra sough of this warld, and a tune on

* The caution and moderation of King William III., and his principles of unlimited toleration, deprived the Cameronians of the opportunity they ardently desired, to retaliate the injuries which they had received during the reign of prelacy, and purify the land, as they called it, from the pollution of blood. They esteemed the Revolution, therefore, only a half measure, which neither comprehended the rebuilding the Kirk in its full splendour, nor the revenge of the death of the Saints on their persecutors.

the pipes weel aneugh at a bytime; and abune a', he thought he had gude security for the siller he lent my gudesire ower the stocking at Primrose Knowe.

Away trots my gudesire to Redgauntlet Castle wi' a heavy purse and a light heart, glad to be out of the Laird's danger. Weel, the first thing he learned at the Castle was, that Sir Robert had fretted himself into a fit of the gout, because he did not appear before twelve o'clock. It wasna a'thegether for sake of the money, Dougal thought; but because he didna like to part wi' my gudesire aff the grund. Dougal was glad to see Steenie, and brought him into the great oak parlour, and there sat the Laird his leesome lane, excepting that he had beside him a great, ill-favoured jackanape, that was a special pet of his; a cankered beast it was, and mony an ill-natured trick it played—ill to please it was, and easily angered—ran about the haill castle, chattering and yowling, and pinching, and biting folk, specially before ill-weather, or disturbances in the state. Sir Robert caa'd it Major Weir, after the warlock that was burnt;* and few folk liked either the name or the conditions of the creature—they thought there was something in it by ordinar—and my gudesire was not just easy in mind when the door shut on him, and he saw himself in the room wi' naebody but the Laird, Dougal MacCallum, and the Major, a thing that hadna chanced to him before.

Sir Robert sat, or, I should say, lay, in a great

* A celebrated wizard, executed at Edinburgh for sorcery and other crimes.

armed chair, wi' his grand velvet gown, and his feet on a cradle; for he had baith gout and gravel, and his face looked as gash and ghastly as Satan's. Major Weir sat opposite to him, in a red laced coat, and the Laird's wig on his head; and aye as Sir Robert girned wi' pain, the jackanape girned too, like a sheep's-head between a pair of tangs—an ill-faur'd, fearsome couple they were. The Laird's buff-coat was hung on a pin behind him, and his broadsword and his pistols within reach; for he keepit up the auld fashion of having the weapons ready, and a horse saddled day and night, just as he used to do when he was able to loup on horseback, and away after ony of the hill-folk he could get speerings of. Some said it was for fear of the Whigs taking vengeance, but I judge it was just his auld custom—he wasna gien to fear ony thing. The rental-book, wi' its black cover and brass clasps, was lying beside him; and a book of sculduddry sangs was put betwixt the leaves, to keep it open at the place where it bore evidence against the Goodman of Primrose-Knowe, as behind the hand with his mails and duties. Sir Robert gave my gudesire a look, as if he would have withered his heart in his bosom. Ye maun ken he had a way of bending his brows, that men saw the visible mark of a horse-shoe in his forehead, deep-dinted, as if it had been stamped there.

"Are ye come light-handed, ye son of a toom whistle?" said Sir Robert. "Zounds! if you are——"

My gudesire, with as gude a countenance as he could put on, made a leg, and placed the bag of money

on the table wi' a dash, like a man that does something clever. The Laird drew it to him hastily—"Is it all here, Steenie, man?"

"Your honour will find it right," said my gudesire.

"Here, Dougal," said the Laird, "gie Steenie a tass of brandy down stairs, till I count the siller and write the receipt."

But they werena weel out of the room, when Sir Robert gied a yelloch that gar'd the Castle rock. Back ran Dougal—in flew the livery-men—yell on yell gied the Laird, ilk ane mair awfu' than the ither. My gudesire knew not whither to stand or flee, but he ventured back into the parlour, where a' was gaun hirdy-girdie—naebody to say 'come in,' or 'gae out.' Terribly the Laird roared for cauld water to his feet, and wine to cool his throat; and Hell, hell, hell, and its flames, was aye the word in his mouth. They brought him water, and when they plunged his swoln feet into the tub, he cried out it was burning; and folk say that it *did* bubble and sparkle like a seething caldron. He flung the cup at Dougal's head, and said he had given him blood instead of burgundy; and, sure aneugh, the lass washed clotted blood aff the carpet the neist day. The jackanape they caa'd Major Weir, it jibbered and cried as if it was mocking its master; my gudesire's head was like to turn—he forgot baith siller and receipt, and down stairs he banged; but as he ran, the shrieks came faint and fainter; there was a deep-drawn shivering groan, and word gaed through the Castle that the Laird was dead.

Weel, away came my gudesire, wi' his finger in his mouth, and his best hope was, that Dougal had seen the money-bag, and heard the Laird speak of writing the receipt. The young Laird, now Sir John, came from Edinburgh, to see things put to rights. Sir John and his father never gree'd weel. Sir John had been bred an advocate, and afterwards sat in the last Scots Parliament and voted for the Union, having gotten, it was thought, a rug of the compensations—if his father could have come out of his grave, he would have brained him for it on his awn hearthstane. Some thought it was easier counting with the auld rough Knight than the fair-spoken young ane—but mair of that anon.

Dougal MacCallum, poor body, neither grat nor graned, but gaed about the house looking like a corpse, but directing, as was his duty, a' the order of the grand funeral. Now, Dougal looked aye waur and waur when night was coming, and was aye the last to gang to his bed, whilk was in a little round just opposite the chamber of dais, whilk his master occupied while he was living, and where he now lay in state, as they caa'd it, weel-a-day! The night before the funeral, Dougal could keep his awn counsel nae langer; he came doun with his proud spirit, and fairly asked auld Hutcheon to sit in his room with him for an hour. When they were in the round, Dougal took ae tass of brandy to himsell, and gave another to Hutcheon, and wished him all health and lang life, and said that, for himsell, he wasna lang for this world; for that, every

night since Sir Robert's death, his silver call had sounded from the state chamber, just as it used to do at nights in his lifetime, to call Dougal to help to turn him in his bed. Dougal said, that being alone with the dead on that floor of the tower (for naebody cared to wake Sir Robert Redgauntlet like another corpse), he had never daured to answer the call, but that now his conscience checked him for neglecting his duty; for, "though death breaks service," said MacCallum, "it shall never break my service to Sir Robert; and I will answer his next whistle, so be you will stand by me, Hutcheon."

Hutcheon had nae will to the wark, but he had stood by Dougal in battle and broil, and he wad not fail him at this pinch; so down the carles sat ower a stoup of brandy, and Hutcheon, who was something of a clerk, would have read a chapter of the Bible; but Dougal would hear naething but a blaud of Davie Lindsay, whilk was the waur preparation.

When midnight came, and the house was quiet as the grave, sure enough the silver whistle sounded as sharp and shrill as if Sir Robert was blowing it, and up got the twa auld serving-men, and tottered into the room where the dead man lay. Hutcheon saw aneugh at the first glance; for there were torches in the room, which shewed him the foul fiend, in his ain shape, sitting on the Laird's coffin! Ower he couped as if he had been dead. He could not tell how lang he lay in a trance at the door, but when he gathered himself, he cried on his neighbour, and getting nae answer, raised the house, when Dougal was found lying dead within

twa steps of the bed where his master's coffin was placed. As for the whistle, it was gaen anes and aye; but mony a time was it heard at the top of the house on the bartizan, and amang the auld chimneys and turrets, where the howlets have their nests. Sir John hushed the matter up, and the funeral passed over without mair bogle-wark.

But when a' was ower, and the Laird was beginning to settle his affairs, every tenant was called up for his arrears, and my gudesire for the full sum that stood against him in the rental-book. Weel, away he trots to the Castle, to tell his story, and there he is introduced to Sir John, sitting in his father's chair, in deep mourning, with weepers and hanging cravat, and a small walking rapier by his side, instead of the auld broadsword that had a hundred-weight of steel about it, what with blade, chape, and basket-hilt. I have heard their communing so often tauld ower, that I almost think I was there mysell, though I couldna be born at the time. (In fact, Alan, my companion mimicked, with a good deal of humour, the flattering, conciliating tone, of the tenant's address, and the hypocritical melancholy of the Laird's reply. His grandfather, he said, had, while he spoke, his eye fixed on the rental-book, as if it were a mastiff-dog that he was afraid would spring up and bite him.)

"I wuss ye joy, sir, of the head seat, and the white loaf, and the braid lairdship. Your father was a kind man to friends and followers; muckle grace to you, Sir John, to fill his shoon—his boots, I suld say, for he

seldom wore shoon, unless it were muils when he had the gout."

"Ay, Steenie," quoth the Laird, sighing deeply, and putting his napkin to his een, "his was a sudden call, and he will be missed in the country; no time to set his house in order—weel prepared Godward, no doubt, which is the root of the matter—but left us behind a tangled hesp to wind, Steenie.—Hem! hem! We maun go to business Steenie; much to do, and little time to do it in."

Here he opened the fatal volume. I have heard of a thing they call Doomsday-book—I am clear it has been a rental of back-ganging tenants.

"Stephen," said Sir John, still in the same soft, sleekit tone of voice—"Stephen Stevenson, or Steenson, ye are down here for a year's rent behind the hand—due at last term."

Stephen. "Please your honour, Sir John, I paid it to your father."

Sir John. "Ye took a receipt then, doubtless Stephen; and can produce it?"

Stephen. "Indeed I hadna time, an it like your honour; for nae sooner had I set doun the siller, and just as his honour Sir Robert, that's gaen, drew it till him to count it, and write out the receipt, he was ta'en wi' the pains that removed him."

"That was unlucky," said Sir John, after a pause. "But ye maybe paid it in the presence of somebody. I want but a *talis qualis* evidence, Stephen. I would go ower strictly to work with no poor man."

Stephen. "Troth, Sir John, there was naebody in the room but Dougal MacCallum the butler. But, as your honour kens, he has e'en followed his auld master."

"Very unlucky again, Stephen," said Sir John, without altering his voice a single note. "The man to whom ye paid the money is dead—and the man who witnessed the payment is dead too—and the siller which should have been to the fore, is neither seen nor heard tell of in the repositories. How am I to believe a' this?"

Stephen. "I dinna ken, your honour; but there is a bit memorandum note of the very coins; for, God help me! I had to borrow out of twenty purses; and I am sure that ilka man there set down will take his grit oath for what purpose I borrowed the money."

Sir John. "I have little doubt ye *borrowed* the money, Steenie. It is the *payment* to my father that I want to have some proof of."

Stephen. "The siller maun be about the house, Sir John. And since your honour never got it, and his honour that was, canna have taen it wi' him, maybe some of the family may have seen it."

Sir John. "We will examine the servants, Stephen; that is but reasonable."

But lackey and lass, and page and groom, all denied stoutly that they had ever seen such a bag of money as my gudesire described. What was waur, he had unluckily not mentioned to any living soul of them his purpose of paying his rent. Ae quean had noticed something under his arm, but she took it for the pipes.

Sir John Redgauntlet ordered the servants out of the room, and then said to my gudesire, "Now, Steenie, ye see ye have fair play; and, as I have little doubt ye ken better where to find the siller than ony other body, I beg, in fair terms, and for your own sake, that you will end this fasherie; for, Stephen, ye maun pay or flitt."

"The Lord forgie your opinion," said Stephen, driven almost to his wit's end—"I am an honest man."

"So am I, Stephen," said his honour; "and so are all the folks in the house, I hope. But if there be a knave amongst us, it must be he that tells the story he cannot prove." He paused and then added mair sternly, "If I understand your trick, sir, you want to take advantage of some malicious reports concerning things in this family, and particularly respecting my father's sudden death, thereby to cheat me out of the money, and perhaps take away my character, by insinuating that I have received the rent I am demanding—Where do you suppose this money to be?—I insist upon knowing."

My gudesire saw every thing look so muckle against him, that he grew nearly desperate—however, he shifted from one foot to another, looked to every corner of the room, and made no answer.

"Speak out, sirrah," said the Laird, assuming a look of his father's, a very particular ane, which he had when he was angry—it seemed as if the wrinkles of his frown made that self-same fearful shape of a horse's shoe in the middle of his brow;—"Speak out, sir! I *will* know your thoughts;—do you suppose that I have this money?"

"Far be it frae me to say so," said Stephen.

"Do you charge any of my people with having taken it?"

"I wad be laith to charge them that may be inno-

cent," said my gudesire; "and if there be any one that is guilty, I have nae proof."

"Somewhere the money must be, if there is a word of truth in your story," said Sir John; "I ask where you think it is—and demand a correct answer?"

"In hell, if you *will* have my thoughts of it," said my gudesire, driven to extremity,—"in hell, with your father, his jackanape, and his silver whistle."

Down the stairs he ran (for the parlour was nae place for him after such a word), and he heard the Laird swearing blood and wounds behind him, as fast as ever did Sir Robert, and roaring for the bailie and the baron-officer.

Away rode my gudesire to his chief creditor (him they caa'd Laurie Lapraik), to try if he could make ony thing out of him; but when he tauld his story, he got but the warst word in his wame—thief, beggar, and dyvour, were the saftest terms; and to the boot of these hard terms, Laurie brought up the auld story of his dipping his hand in the blood of God's saunts, just as if a tenant could have helped riding with the Laird, and that a laird like Sir Robert Redgauntlet. My gudesire was, by this time, far beyond the bounds of patience, and, while he and Laurie were at deil speed the liars, he was wanchancie aneugh to abuse Lapraik's doctrine as weel as the man, and said things that garr'd folks' flesh grue that heard them;—he wasna just himsell, and he had lived wi' a wild set in his day.

At last they parted, and my gudesire was to ride hame through the wood of Pitmurkie, that is a' fou of

black firs, as they say.—I ken the wood, but the firs may be black or white for what I can tell—At the entry of the wood there is a wild common, and on the edge of the common, a little lonely change-house, that was keepit then by an ostler wife, they suld hae caa'd her Tibbie Faw, and there puir Steenie cried for a mutchkin of brandy, for he had had no refreshment the haill day. Tibbie was earnest wi' him to take a bite of meat, but he couldna think o't, nor would he take his foot out of the stirrup, and took off the brandy wholely at twa draughts, and named a toast at each:—the first was, the memory of Sir Robert Redgauntlet, and might he never lie quiet in his grave till he had righted his poor bond-tenant; and the second was, a health to Man's Enemy, if he would but get him back the pock of siller, or tell him what came o't, for he saw the haill world was like to regard him as a thief and a cheat, and he took that waur than even the ruin of his house and hauld.

On he rode, little caring where. It was a dark night turned, and the trees made it yet darker, and he let the beast take its ain road through the wood; when, all of a sudden, from tired and wearied that it was before, the nag began to spring, and flee, and stend, that my gudesire could hardly keep the saddle—Upon the whilk, a horseman, suddenly riding up beside him, said, "That's a mettle beast of yours, freend; will you sell him?"—So saying, he touched the horse's neck with his riding-wand, and it fell into its auld heigh-ho of a stumbling trot. "But his spunk's soon out of

him, I think," continued the stranger, "and that is like mony a man's courage, that thinks he wad do great things till he come to the proof."

My gudesire scarce listened to this, but spurred his horse, with "Gude e'en to you, freend."

But it's like the stranger was ane that doesna lightly yield his point; for, ride as Steenie liked, he was aye beside him at the self-same pace. At last, my gudesire, Steenie Steenson, grew half angry; and, to say the truth, half feared.

"What is it that ye want with me, freend?" he said. "If ye be a robber, I have nae money, if ye be a leal man, wanting company, I have nae heart to mirth or speaking; and if ye want to ken the road, I scarce ken it mysell."

"If you will tell me your grief," said the stranger, "I am one that, though I have been sair miscaa'd in the world, am the only hand for helping my freends."

So my gudesire, to ease his ain heart, mair than from any hope of help, told him the story from beginning to end.

"It's a hard pinch," said the stranger; "but I think I can help you."

"If you could lend the money, sir, and take a lang day—I ken nae other help on earth," said my gudesire.

"But there may be some under the earth," said the stranger. "Come, I'll be frank wi' you; I could lend you the money on bond, but you would maybe scruple my terms. Now, I can tell you, that your auld Laird is disturbed in his grave by your curses, and the wail-

ing of your family, and if ye daur venture to go to see him, he will give you the receipt."

My gudesire's hair stood on end at this proposal, but he thought his companion might be some humoursome chield that was trying to frighten him, and might end with lending him the money. Besides, he was bauld wi' brandy, and desperate wi' distress; and he said, he had courage to go to the gate of hell, and a step farther for that receipt.—The stranger laughed.

Weel, they rode on through the thickest of the wood, when, all of a sudden, the horse stopped at the door of a great house; and, but that he knew the place was ten miles off, my father would have thought he was at Redgauntlet Castle. They rode into the outer court-yard, through the muckle faulding yetts, and aneath the auld portcullis; and the whole front of the house was lighted, and there were pipes and fiddles, and as much dancing and deray within as used to be in Sir Robert's house at Pace and Yule, and such high seasons. They lap off, and my gudesire, as seemed to him, fastened his horse to the very ring he had tied him to that morning, when he gaed to wait on the young Sir John.

"God!" said my gudesire, "if Sir Robert's death be but a dream!"

He knocked at the ha' door just as he was wont, and his auld acquaintance, Dougal MacCallum, just after his wont, too,—came to open the door, and said, "Piper Steenie are ye there, lad? Sir Robert has been crying for you."

My gudesire was like a man in a dream—he looked for the stranger, but he was gane for the time. At last he just tried to say, "Ha! Dougal Driveower, are ye living? I thought ye had been dead."

"Never fash yoursell wi' me," said Dougal, "but look to yoursell; and see ye tak naething frae onybody here, neither meat, drink, or siller, except just the receipt that is your ain."

So saying, he led the way out through halls and trances that were weel kend to my gudesire, and into the auld oak parlour; and there was as much singing of profane sangs, and birling of red wine, and speaking blasphemy and sculduddry, as had ever been in Redgauntlet Castle when it was at the blithest.

But, Lord take us in keeping! what a set of ghastly revellers they were that sat round that table!—My gudesire kend mony that had long before gane to their place, for often had he piped to the most part in the hall of Redgauntlet. There was the fierce Middleton, and the dissolute Rothes, and the crafty Lauderdale; and Dalyell, with his bald head and a beard to his girdle; and Earlshall, with Cameron's blude on his hand; and wild Bonshaw, that tied blessed Mr. Cargill's limbs till the blude sprung; and Dunbarton Douglas, the twice-turned traitor baith to country and king. There was the Bluidy Advocate MacKenyie, who, for his worldly wit and wisdom, had been to the rest as a god. And there was Claverhouse, as beautiful as when he lived, with his long, dark, curled locks, streaming down over his laced buff-coat, and his left hand always on his

right spule-blade, to hide the wound that the silver bullet had made.* He sat apart from them all, and looked at them with a melancholy, haughty countenance; while the rest hallooed, and sung, and laughed, that the room rang. But their smiles were fearfully contorted from time to time; and their laugh passed into such wild sounds, as made my gudesire's very nails grow blue, and chilled the marrow in his banes.

They that waited at the table were just the wicked serving-men and troopers, that had done their work and cruel bidding on earth. There was the Lang Lad of the Nethertown, that helped to take Argyle; and the Bishop's summoner, that they called the Deil's Rattle-bag; and the wicked guardsmen, in their laced coats; and the savage Highland Amorites, that shed blood like water; and many a proud serving-man, haughty of heart and bloody of hand, cringing to the rich, and making them wickeder than they would be; grinding the poor to powder, when the rich had broken them to fragments. And mony, mony mair were coming and ganging, a' as busy in their vocation as if they had been alive.

Sir Robert Redgauntlet, in the midst of a' this fearful riot, cried, wi' a voice like thunder, on Steenie Piper, to come to the board-head where he was sitting; his legs stretched out before him, and swathed up with flannel, with his holster pistols aside him, while the great broadsword rested against his chair, just as my gudesire had seen him the last time upon earth—the

* Note B.

very cushion for the jackanape was close to him, but the creature itsell was not there—it wasna its hour, it's likely; for he heard them say as he came forward, "Is not the Major come yet?" And another answered, "The jackanape will be here betimes the morn." And when my gudesire came forward, Sir Robert, or his ghaist, or the deevil in his likeness, said, "Weel, Piper, hae ye settled wi' my son for the year's rent?"

With much ado, my father gat breath to say, that Sir John would not settle without his honour's receipt.

"Ye shall hae that for a tune of the pipes, Steenie," said the appearance of Sir Robert—"Play us up 'Weel hoddled, Luckie.'"

Now this was a tune my gudesire learned frae a warlock, that heard it when they were worshipping Satan at their meetings; and my gudesire had sometimes played it at the ranting suppers in Redgauntlet Castle, but never very willingly; and now he grew cauld at the very name of it, and said, for excuse, he hadna his pipes wi' him.

"MacCallum, ye limb of Beelzebub," said the fearfu' Sir Robert, "bring Steenie the pipes that I am keeping for him!"

MacCallum brought a pair of pipes might have served the piper of Donald of the Isles. But he gave my gudesire a nudge as he offered them; and looking secretly and closely, Steenie saw that the chanter was of steel, and heated to a white heat; so he had fair warning not to trust his fingers with it. So he excused

himself again, and said he was faint and frightened, and had not wind aneugh to fill the bag.

"Then ye maun eat and drink, Steenie," said the figure; "for we do little else here; and it's ill speaking between a fou man and a fasting."

Now these were the very words that the bloody Earl of Douglas said to keep the king's messenger in hand, while he cut the head off MacLellan of Bombie, at the Threave Castle;* and that put Steenie mair and mair on his guard. So he spoke up like a man, and said he came neither to eat, or drink, or make minstrelsy; but simply for his ain—to ken what was come o' the money he had paid, and to get a discharge for it; and he was so stout-hearted by this time, that he charged Sir Robert for conscience-sake—(he had no power to say the holy name)—and as he hoped for peace and rest, to spread no snares for him, but just to give him his ain.

The appearance gnashed its teeth and laughed, but it took from a large pocket-book the receipt, and handed it to Steenie. "There is your receipt, ye pitiful cur; and for the money, my dog-whelp of a son may go look for it in the Cat's Cradle."

My gudesire uttered mony thanks, and was about to retire, when Sir Robert roared aloud, "Stop though, thou sack-doubling son of a whore! I am not done with thee. HERE we do nothing for nothing; and you must return on this very day twelvemonth, to pay

* The reader is referred for particulars to Pitscottie's History of Scotland.

your master the homage that you owe me for my protection."

My father's tongue was loosed of a suddenty, and he said aloud, "I refer mysell to God's pleasure, and not to yours."

He had no sooner uttered the word than all was dark around him; and he sunk on the earth with such a sudden shock, that he lost both breath and sense.

How lang Steenie lay there, he could not tell; but when he came to himsell, he was lying in the auld kirkyard of Redgauntlet parochine, just at the door of the family aisle, and the scutcheon of the auld knight, Sir Robert, hanging over his head. There was a deep morning fog on grass and gravestane around him, and his horse was feeding quietly beside the minister's twa cows. Steenie would have thought the whole was a dream, but he had the receipt in his hand, fairly written and signed by the auld Laird; only the last letters of his name were a little disorderly, written like one seized with sudden pain.

Sorely troubled in his mind, he left that dreary place, rode through the mist to Redgauntlet Castle, and with much ado he got speech of the Laird.

"Well, you dyvour bankrupt," was the first word, "have you brought me my rent?"

"No," answered my gudesire, "I have not; but I have brought your honour Sir Robert's receipt for it."

"How, sirrah?—Sir Robert's receipt!—You told me he had not given you one."

"Will your honour please to see if that bit line is right?"

Sir John looked at every line, and at every letter, with much attention; and at last, at the date, which my gudesire had not observed,—"*From my appointed place*," he read, "*this twenty-fifth of November.*"—"What!—That is yesterday!—Villain, thou must have gone to hell for this!"

"I got it from your honour's father—whether he be in heaven or hell, I know not," said Steenie.

"I will delate you for a warlock to the Privy Council!" said Sir John. "I will send you to your master, the devil, with the help of a tar-barrel and a torch!"

"I intend to delate mysell to the Presbytery," said Steenie, "and tell them all I have seen last night, whilk are things fitter for them to judge of than a borrel man like me."

Sir John paused, composed himsell, and desired to hear the full history; and my gudesire told it him from point to point, as I have told it you—word for word, neither more nor less.

Sir John was silent again for a long time, and at last he said, very composedly, "Steenie, this story of yours concerns the honour of many a noble family besides mine; and if it be a leasing-making, to keep yourself out of my danger, the least you can expect is to have a redhot iron driven through your tongue, and that will be as bad as scauding your fingers wi' a redhot chanter. But yet it may be true, Steenie; and if the money cast up, I shall not know what to think of

it.—But where shall we find the Cat's Cradle? There are cats enough about the old house, but I think they kitten without the ceremony of bed or cradle."

"We were best ask Hutcheon," said my gudesire; "he kens a' the odd corners about as weel as—another serving-man that is now gane, and that I wad not like to name."

Aweel, Hutcheon, when he was asked, told them, that a ruinous turret, lang disused, next to the clock-house, only accessible by a ladder, for the opening was on the outside, and far above the battlements, was called of old the Cat's Cradle.

"There will I go immediately," said Sir John, and he took (with what purpose, Heaven kens) one of his father's pistols from the hall-table, where they had lain since the night he died, and hastened to the battlements.

It was a dangerous place to climb, for the ladder was auld and frail, and wanted ane or twa rounds. However, up got Sir John, and entered at the turret door, where his body stopped the only little light that was in the bit turret. Something flees at him wi' a vengeance, maist dang him back ower—bang gaed the knight's pistol, and Hutcheon, that held the ladder, and my gudesire that stood beside him, hears a loud skelloch. A minute after, Sir John flings the body of the jackanape down to them, and cries that the siller is fund, and that they should come up and help him. And there was the bag of siller sure aneugh, and mony orra things besides, that had been missing for mony a

day. And Sir John, when he had riped the turret weel, led my gudesire into the dining-parlour, and took him by the hand, and spoke kindly to him, and said he was sorry he should have doubted his word, and that he would hereafter be a good master to him, to make amends.

"And now, Steenie," said Sir John, "although this vision of yours tends, on the whole, to my father's credit, as an honest man, that he should, even after his death, desire to see justice done to a poor man like you, yet you are sensible that ill-dispositioned men might make bad constructions upon it, concerning his soul's health. So, I think, we had better lay the haill dirdum on that ill-deedie creature, Major Weir, and say nae-thing about your dream in the wood of Pitmurkie. You had taken ower muckle brandy to be very certain about onything; and, Steenie, this receipt" (his hand shook while he held it out),—"it's but a queer kind of document, and we will do best, I think, to put it quietly in the fire."

"Od, but for as queer as it is, it's a' the voucher I have for my rent," said my gudesire, who was afraid, it may be, of losing the benefit of Sir Robert's discharge.

"I will bear the contents to your credit in the rental-book, and give you a discharge under my own hand," said Sir John, "and that on the spot. And, Steenie, if you can hold your tongue about this matter, you shall sit, from this term downward, at an easier rent."

"Mony thanks to your honour," said Steenie, who

saw easily in what corner the wind was; "doubtless I will be conformable to all your honour's commands; only I would willingly speak wi' some powerful minister on the subject, for I do not like the sort of soumons of appointment whilk your honour's father"——

"Do not call the phantom my father!" said Sir John, interrupting him.

"Weel, then, the thing that was so like him,"—said my gudesire; "he spoke of my coming back to him this time twelvemonth, and it's a weight on my conscience."

"Aweel, then," said Sir John, "if you be so much distressed in mind, you may speak to our minister of the parish; he is a douce man, regards the honour of our family, and the mair that he may look for some patronage from me."

Wi' that, my father readily agreed that the receipt should be burnt, and the Laird threw it into the chimney with his ain hand. Burn it would not for them, though; but away it flew up the lumb, wi' a lang train of sparks at its tail, and a hissing noise like a squib.

My grandsire gaed down to the Manse, and the minister, when he had heard the story, said, it was his real opinion, that though my gudesire had gaen very far in tampering with dangerous matters, yet, as he had refused the devil's arles (for such was the offer of meat and drink), and had refused to do homage by piping at his bidding, he hoped, that if he held a circumspect walk hereafter, Satan could take little advantage by what was come

and gane. And, indeed, my gudesire, of his ain accord, lang forswore baith the pipes and the brandy—it was not even till the year was out, and the fatal day passed, that he would so much as take the fiddle, or drink usquebaugh or tippenny.

Sir John made up his story about the jackanape as he liked himsell; and some believe till this day there was no more in the matter than the filching nature of the brute. Indeed, ye'll no hinder some to threap, that it was nane o' the Auld Enemy that Dougal and my gudesire saw in the Laird's room, but only that wanchancy creature, the Major, capering on the coffin; and that, as to the blawing on the Laird's whistle that was heard after he was dead, the filthy brute could do that as weel as the Laird himsell, if no better. But Heaven kens the truth, whilk first came out by the minister's wife, after Sir John and her ain gudeman were baith in the moulds. And then my gudesire, wha was failed in his limbs, but not in his judgment or memory—at least nothing to speak of—was obliged to tell the real narrative to his friends, for the credit of his good name. He might else have been charged for a warlock.*

THE shades of evening were growing thicker around us as my conductor finished his long narrative with this moral—"Ye see, birkie, it is nae chancy thing to tak a stranger traveller for a guide, when you are in an uncouth land."

* Note C.

"I should not have made that inference," said I. "Your grandfather's adventure was fortunate for himself, whom it saved from ruin and distress; and fortunate for his landlord also, whom it prevented from committing a gross act of injustice."

"Ay, but they had baith to sup the sauce o't sooner or later," said Wandering Willie—"What was fristed wasna forgiven. Sir John died before he was much over threescore; and it was just like of a moment's illness. And for my gudesire, though he departed in fulness of life, yet there was my father, a yauld man of forty-five, fell down betwixt the stilts of his pleugh, and raise never again, and left nae bairn but me, a puir sightless, fatherless, motherless creature, could neither work nor want. Things gaed weel aneugh at first; for Sir Redwald Redgauntlet, the only son of Sir John and the oye of auld Sir Robert, and, waes me! the last of the honourable house, took the farm aff our hands, and brought me into his household to have care of me. He liked music,[1] and I had the best teachers baith England and Scotland could gie me. Mony a merry year was I wi' him; but waes me! he gaed out with other pretty men in the forty-five—I'll say nae mair about it—My head never settled weel since I lost him; and if I say another word about it, deil a bar will I have the heart to play the night.—Look out, my gentle chap," he resumed in a different tone, "ye should see the lights at Brokenburn Glen by this time."

LETTER THE TWELFTH.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.

Tam Luter was their minstrel meet,
  Gude Lord as he could lance,
He played sae shrill, and sang sae sweet,
  Till Towsie took a trance.
Auld Lightfoot there he did forleet,
  And counterfeited France;
He used himself as man discreet,
  And up took Morrice danse
                Sae loud,
  At Christ's Kirk on the Green that day.
                KING JAMES I.

I CONTINUE to scribble at length, though the subject may seem somewhat deficient in interest. Let the grace of the narrative, therefore, and the concern we take in each other's matters, make amends for its tenuity. We fools of fancy, who suffer ourselves, like Malvolio, to be cheated with our own visions, have, nevertheless, this advantage over the wise ones of the earth, that we have our whole stock of enjoyments under our own command, and can dish for ourselves an intellectual banquet with most moderate assistance from external objects. It is, to be sure, something like the feast which the Barmecide served up to Alnaschar; and we cannot be expected to get fat upon such diet. But

then, neither is there repletion nor nausea, which often succeed the grosser and more material revel. On the whole, I still pray, with the Ode to Castle Building—

> "Give me thy hope which sickens not the heart;
> Give me thy wealth which has no wings to fly;
> Give me the bliss thy visions can impart;'
> Thy friendship give me, warm in poverty!"

And so, despite thy solemn smile and sapient shake of the head, I will go on picking such interest as I can out of my trivial adventures, even though that interest should be the creation of my own fancy; nor will I cease to inflict on thy devoted eyes the labour of perusing the scrolls in which I shall record my narrative.

My last broke off as we were on the point of descending into the glen at Brokenburn, by the dangerous track which I had first travelled *en croupe*, behind a furious horseman, and was now again to brave under the precarious guidance of a blind man.

It was now getting dark; but this was no inconvenience to my guide, who moved on, as formerly, with instinctive security of step, so that we soon reached the bottom, and I could see lights twinkling in the cottage which had been my place of refuge on a former occasion. It was not thither, however, that our course was directed. We left the habitation of the Laird to the left, and turning down the brook, soon approached the small hamlet which had been erected at the mouth of the stream, probably on account of the convenience

which it afforded as a harbour to the fishing-boats. A large, low cottage, full in our front, seemed highly illuminated; for the light not only glanced from every window and aperture in its frail walls, but was even visible from rents and fractures in the roof, composed of tarred shingles, repaired in part by thatch and *divot*.

While these appearances engaged my attention, that of my companion was attracted by a regular succession of sounds, like a bouncing on the floor, mixed with a very faint noise of music, which Willie's acute organs at once recognized and accounted for, while to me it was almost inaudible. The old man struck the earth with his staff in a violent passion. "The whoreson fisher rabble! They have brought another violer upon my walk! They are such smuggling blackguards, that they must run in their very music; but I'll sort them waur than ony gauger in the county.—Stay—hark—it's no a fiddle neither—it's the pipe and tabor bastard, Simon of Sowport, frae the Nicol Forest; but I'll pipe and tabor him!—Let me hae ance my left hand on his cravat, and ye shall see what my right will do. Come away, chap—come away, gentle chap—nae time to be picking and waling your steps." And on he passed with long and determined strides, dragging me along with him.

I was not quite easy in his company; for, now that his minstrel pride was hurt, the man had changed from the quiet, decorous, I might almost say respectable person, which he seemed while he told his tale, into the appearance of a fierce, brawling, dissolute stroller.

So that when he entered the large hut, where a great number of fishers, with their wives and daughters, were engaged in eating, drinking, and dancing, I was somewhat afraid that the impatient violence of my companion might procure us an indifferent reception.

But the universal shout of welcome with which Wandering Willie was received—the hearty congratulations—the repeated "Here's t'ye, Willie!"—"Whare hae ye been, ye blind deevil?" and the call upon him to pledge them—above all, the speed with which the obnoxious pipe and tabor were put to silence, gave the old man such effectual assurance of undiminished popularity and importance, as at once put his jealousy to rest, and changed his tone of offended dignity, into one better fitted to receive such cordial greetings. Young men and women crowded round, to tell how much they were afraid some mischance had detained him, and how two or three young fellows had set out in quest of him.

"It was nae mischance, praised be Heaven," said Willie, "but the absence of the lazy loon Rob the Rambler, my comrade, that didna come to meet me on the Links; but I hae gotten a braw consort in his stead, worth a dozen of him, the unhanged blackguard."

"And wha is't tou's gotten, Wullie, lad?" said half a score of voices, while all eyes were turned on your humble servant, who kept the best countenance he could, though not quite easy at becoming the centre to which all eyes were pointed.

"I ken him by his hemmed cravat," said one fellow; "it's Gil Hobson, the souple tailor frae Burgh. —Ye are welcome to Scotland, ye prick-the-clout loon," he said, thrusting forth a paw much the colour of a badger's back, and of most portentous dimensions.

"Gil Hobson? Gil whoreson!" exclaimed Wandering Willie; "it's a gentle chap that I judge to be an apprentice wi' auld Joshua Geddes, to the quaker-trade."

"What trade be's that, man?" said he of the badger-coloured fist.

"Canting and lying,"—said Willie, which produced a thundering laugh; "but I am teaching the callant a better trade, and that is, feasting and fiddling."

Willie's conduct in thus announcing something like my real character, was contrary to compact; and yet I was rather glad he did so, for the consequence of putting a trick upon these rude and ferocious men, might, in case of discovery, have been dangerous to us both, and I was at the same time delivered from the painful effort to support a fictitious character. The good company, except perhaps one or two of the young women, whose looks expressed some desire for better acquaintance, gave themselves no farther trouble about me; but, while the seniors resumed their places near an immense bowl, or rather reeking caldron of brandy-punch, the younger arranged themselves on the floor, and called loudly on Willie to strike up.

With a brief caution to me, to "mind my credit, for fishers have ears, though fish have none," Willie led off in capital style, and I followed, certainly not so

as to disgrace my companion, who, every now and then, gave me a nod of approbation. The dances were, of course, the Scottish jigs, and reels, and "twasome dances," with a strathspey or hornpipe for interlude; and the want of grace, on the part of the performers, was amply supplied by truth of ear, vigour and decision of step, and the agility proper to the northern performers. My own spirits rose with the mirth around me, and with old Willie's admirable execution, and frequent "weel dune gentle chap, yet;"—and, to confess the truth, I felt a great deal more pleasure in this rustic revel, than I have done at the more formal balls and concerts in your famed city, to which I have sometimes made my way. Perhaps this was, because I was a person of more importance to the presiding matron of Brokenburn-foot, than I had the means of rendering myself to the far-famed Miss Nickie Murray, the patroness of your Edinburgh assemblies. The person I mean was a buxom dame of about thirty, her fingers loaded with many a silver ring, and three or four of gold; her ankles liberally displayed from under her numerous blue, white, and scarlet short petticoats, and attired in hose of the finest and whitest lamb's-wool, which arose from shoes of Spanish cordwain, fastened with silver buckles. She took the lead in my favour, and declared, "that the brave young gentleman should not weary himself to death wi' playing, but take the floor for a dance or twa."

"And what's to come of me, Dame Martin?" said Willie.

"Come o' thee?" said the dame; "mishanter on the auld beard o' ye! ye could play for twenty hours on end, and tire out the haill country-side wi' dancing before ye laid down your bow, saving for a by-drink or the like o' that."

"In troth, dame," answered Willie, "ye are nae sae far wrang; sae if my comrade is to take his dance, ye maun gie me my drink, and then bob it away like Madge of Middlebie."

The drink was soon brought; but while Willie was partaking of it, a party entered the hut, which arrested my attention at once, and intercepted the intended gallantry with which I had proposed to present my hand to the fresh-coloured, well-made, white-ankled Thetis, who had obtained me manumission from my musical task.

This was nothing less than the sudden appearance of the old woman whom the Laird had termed Mabel; Cristal Nixon, his male attendant; and the young person who had said grace to us when I supped with him.

This young person—Alan, thou art in thy way a bit of a conjurer—this young person whom I *did not* describe, and whom you for that very reason, suspected was not an indifferent object to me—is I am sorry to say it, in very fact not so much so as in prudence she ought. I will not use the name of *love* on this occasion; for I have applied it too often to transient whims and fancies to escape your satire, should I venture to apply it now. For it is a phrase, I must confess, which

I have used—a romancer would say profaned—a little too often, considering how few years have passed over my head. But seriously, the fair chaplain of Brokenburn has been often in my head when she had no business there; and if this can give thee any clew for explaining my motives in lingering about the country, and assuming the character of Willie's companion, why, hang thee, thou art welcome to make use of it—a permisson for which thou need'st not thank me much, as thou would'st not have failed to assume it, whether it were given or no.

Such being my feelings, conceive how they must have been excited, when, like a beam upon a cloud, I saw this uncommonly beautiful girl enter the apartment in which they were dancing; not, however, with the air of an equal, but that of a superior, come to grace with her presence the festival of her dependents. The old man and woman attended, with looks as sinister as hers were lovely, like two of the worst winter months waiting upon the bright-eyed May.

When she entered—wonder if thou wilt—she wore a *green mantle*, such as thou hast described as the garb of thy fair client, and confirmed what I had partly guessed from thy personal description, that my chaplain and thy visiter were the same person. There was an alteration on her brow the instant she recognized me. She gave her cloak to her female attendant, and, after a momentary hesitation, as if uncertain whether to advance or retire, she walked into the room with dignity and composure, all making way, the men unbonnet-

ing, and the women courtesying respectfully, as she assumed a chair which was reverently placed for her accommodation, apart from others.

There was then a pause, until the bustling mistress of the ceremonies, with awkward, but kindly courtesy, offered the young lady a glass of wine, which was at first declined, and at length only thus far accepted, that, bowing round to the festive company, the fair visiter wished them all health and mirth, and just touching the brim with her lip, replaced it on the salver.

"There was another pause; and I did not immediately recollect, confused as I was by this unexpected apparition, that it belonged to me to break it. At length a murmur was heard around me, being expected to exhibit,—nay, to lead down the dance,—in consequence of the previous conversation.

"Deil's in the fiddler lad," was muttered from more quarters than one—"saw folk ever sic a thing as a shamefaced fiddler before?"

At length a venerable Triton, seconding his remonstrances with a hearty thump on my shoulder, cried out, "To the floor—to the floor, and let us see how ye can fling—the lasses are a' waiting."

Up I jumped, sprung from the elevated station which constituted our orchestra, and, arranging my ideas as rapidly as I could, advanced to the head of the room, and instead of offering my hand to the white-footed Thetis aforesaid, I venturously made the same proposal to her of the Green Mantle.

The nymph's lovely eyes seemed to open with

astonishment at the audacity of this offer; and, from the murmurs I heard around me, I also understood that it surprised, and perhaps offended, the bystanders. But after the first moment's emotion, she wreathed her neck, and drawing herself haughtily up, like one who was willing to shew that she was sensible of the full extent of her own condescension, extended her hand towards me, like a princess gracing a squire of low degree.

There is affectation in all this, thought I to myself, if the Green Mantle has borne true evidence—for young ladies do not make visits, or write letters to counsel learned in the law, to interfere in the motions of those whom they hold as cheap as this nymph seems to do me; and if I am cheated by a resemblance of cloaks, still I am interested to shew myself, in some degree, worthy of the favour she has granted with so much state and reserve. The dance to be performed was the old Scots Jig, in which you are aware I used to play no sorry figure at La Pique's, when thy clumsy movements used to be rebuked by raps over the knuckles with that great professor's fiddlestick. The choice of the tune was left to my comrade Willie, who, having finished his drink, feloniously struck up the well-known and popular measure,

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker."

An astounding laugh arose at my expense, and I should have been annihilated, but that the smile which mantled on the lip of my partner, had a different

expression from that of ridicule, and seemed to say, "Do not take this to heart." And I did not, Alan—my partner danced admirably, and I like one who was determined, if outshone, which I could not help, not to be altogether thrown into the shade.

I assure you our performance, as well as Willie's music, deserved more polished spectators and auditors; but we could not then have been greeted with such enthusiastic shouts of applause as attended while I handed my partner to her seat, and took my place by her side, as one who had a right to offer the attentions usual on such an occasion. She was visibly embarrassed, but I was determined not to observe her confusion, and to avail myself of the opportunity of learning whether this beautiful creature's mind was worthy of the casket in which Nature had lodged it.

Nevertheless, however courageously I formed this resolution, you cannot but too well guess the difficulties I must needs have felt in carrying it into execution; since want of habitual intercourse with the charmers of the other sex has rendered me a sheepish cur, only one grain less awkward than thyself. Then she was so very beautiful, and assumed an air of so much dignity, that I was like to fall under the fatal error of supposing she should only be addressed with something very clever; and in the hasty racking which my brains underwent in this persuasion, not a single idea occurred that common sense did not reject as fustian on the one hand, or weary, flat, and stale triticism on the other. I felt as if my understanding were no longer my own,

but was alternately under the dominion of Aldeborontiphoscophornio, and that of his facetious friend Rigdum-Funnidos. How did I envy at that moment our friend Jack Oliver, who produces with such happy complacence his fardel of small talk, and who, as he never doubts his own powers of affording amusement, passes them current with every pretty woman he approaches, and fills up the intervals of chat by his complete acquaintance with the exercise of the fan, the *flaçon*, and the other duties of the *Cavaliere serviente*. Some of these I attempted, but I suppose it was awkwardly; at least the Lady Greenmantle received them as a princess accepts the homage of a clown.

Meantime the floor remained empty, and as the mirth of the good meeting was somewhat checked, I ventured, as a dernier resort, to propose a minuet. She thanked me, and told me haughtily enough, "she was here to encourage the harmless pleasures of these good folks, but was not disposed to make an exhibition of her own indifferent dancing for their amusement."

She paused a moment, as if she expected me to suggest something; and as I remained silent and rebuked, she bowed her head more graciously, and said, "Not to affront you, however, a country-dance, if you please."

What an ass was I, Alan, not to have anticipated her wishes! Should I not have observed that the ill-favoured couple, Mabel and Cristal, had placed themselves on each side of her seat, like the supporters of the royal arms? the man, thick, short, shaggy, and hirsute,

as the lion; the female, skin-dried, tight-laced, long, lean, and hungry-faced, like the unicorn. I ought to have recollected, that under the close inspection of two such watchful salvages, our communication, while in repose, could not have been easy; that the period of dancing a minuet was not the very choicest time for conversation; but that the noise, the exercise, and the mazy confusion of a country-dance, where the inexperienced performers were every now and then running against each other, and compelling the other couples to stand still for a minute at a time, besides the more regular repose afforded by the intervals of the dance itself, gave the best possible openings for a word or two spoken in season, and without being liable to observation.

We had but just led down, when an opportunity of the kind occurred, and my partner said, with great gentleness and modesty, "It is not perhaps very proper in me to acknowledge an acquaintance that is not claimed; but I believe I speak to Mr. Darsie Latimer?"

"Darsie Latimer was indeed the person that had now the honour and happiness——"

I would have gone on in the false gallop of compliment, but she cut me short. "And why," she said, "is Mr. Latimer here, and in disguise, or at least assuming an office unworthy of a man of education?—I beg pardon," she continued,—"I would not give you pain, but surely making an associate of a person of that description——"

She looked towards my friend Willie, and was silent.

I felt heartily ashamed of myself, and hastened to say it was an idle frolic, which want of occupation had suggested, and which I could not regret, since it had procured me the pleasure I at present enjoyed.

Without seeming to notice my compliment, she took the next opportunity to say, "Will Mr. Latimer permit a stranger who wishes him well to ask, whether it is right that, at his active age, he should be so far void of occupation, as to be ready to adopt low society for the sake of idle amusement?"

"You are severe, madam," I answered; "but I cannot think myself degraded by mixing with any society where I meet——"

Here I stopped short, conscious that I was giving my answer an unhandsome turn. The *argumentum ad hominem*, the last to which a polite man has recourse, may, however, be justified by circumstances, but seldom or never the *argumentum ad fœminam.*

She filled up the blank herself which I had left. "Where you meet *me*, I suppose you would say? But the case is different. I am, from my unhappy fate, obliged to move by the will of others, and to be in places which I would by my own will gladly avoid. Besides, I am, except for these few minutes, no participator of the revels—a spectator only, and attended by my servants. Your situation is different—you are here by choice, the partaker and minister of the pleasures of a class below you in education, birth, and fortunes. If I speak harshly, Mr. Latimer," she added, with much sweetness of manner, "I mean kindly."

I was confounded by her speech, "severe in youthful wisdom;" all of *naïve* or lively, suitable to such a dialogue, vanished from my recollection, and I answered, with gravity like her own, "I am, indeed, better educated than these poor people; but you, madam, whose kind admonition I am grateful for, must know more of my condition than I do myself—I dare not say I am their superior in birth, since I know nothing of my own, or in fortunes, over which hangs an impenetrable cloud."

"And why should your ignorance on these points drive you into low society and idle habits?" answered my female monitor. "Is it manly to wait till fortune cast her beams upon you, when by exertion of your own energy you might distinguish yourself?—Do not the pursuits of learning lie open to you—of manly ambition—of war?—But no—not of war, that has already cost you too dear."

"I will be what you wish me to be," I replied with eagerness—"You have but to choose my path, and you shall see if I do not pursue it with energy, were it only because you command me."

"Not because I command you," said the maiden, "but because reason, common sense, manhood, and, in one word, regard for your own safety, give the same counsel."

"At least permit me to reply, that reason and sense never assumed a fairer form—of persuasion," I hastily added; for she turned from me—nor did she give me another opportunity of continuing what I had to say till the next pause of the dance, when, determined to bring

our dialogue to a point, I said, "You mentioned manhood also, and, in the same breath, personal danger. My ideas of manhood suggest that it is cowardice to retreat before dangers of a doubtful character. You, who appear to know so much of my fortunes that I might call you my guardian angel, tell me what these dangers are, that I may judge whether manhood calls on me to face or to fly them."

She was evidently perplexed by this appeal.

"You make me pay dearly for acting as your humane adviser," she replied at last: "I acknowledge an interest in your fate, and yet I dare not tell you whence it arises; neither am I at liberty to say why, or from whom, you are in danger; but it is not less true that danger is near and imminent. Ask me no more, but, for your own sake, begone from this country. Elsewhere you are safe—here you do but invite your fate."

"But am I doomed to bid thus farewell to almost the only human being who has shewed an interest in my welfare?—Do not say so—say that we shall meet again, and the hope shall be the leading star to regulate my course!"

"It is more than probable," she said—"much more than probable, that we may never meet again. The help which I now render you is all that may be in my power; it is such as I should render to a blind man whom I might observe approaching the verge of a precipice; it ought to excite no surprise, and requires no gratitude."

So saying, she again turned from me, nor did she

address me until the dance was on the point of ending, when she said, "Do not attempt to speak to, or approach me again in the course of the night; leave the company as soon as you can, but not abruptly, and God be with you."

I handed her to her seat, and did not quit the fair palm I held, without expressing my feelings by a gentle pressure. She coloured slightly, and withdrew her hand, but not angrily. Seeing the eyes of Cristal and Mabel sternly fixed on me, I bowed deeply, and withdrew from her; my heart saddening, and my eyes becoming dim in spite of me, as the shifting crowd hid us from each other.

It was my intention to have crept back to my comrade Willie, and resumed my bow with such spirit as I might, although, at the moment, I would have given half my income for an instant's solitude. But my retreat was cut off by Dame Martin, with the frankness —if it is not an inconsistent phrase—of rustic coquetry, that goes straight up to the point.

"Ay, lad, ye seem unca sune weary, to dance sae lightly? Better the nag that ambles a' the day, than him that makes a brattle for a mile, and then's dune wi' the road."

This was a fair challenge, and I could not decline accepting it. Besides, I could see Dame Martin was queen of the revels; and so many were the rude and singular figures about me, that I was by no means certain whether I might not need some protection. I seized on her willing hand, and we took our places in the dance, where, if I did not acquit myself with all

the accuracy of step and movement which I had before attempted, I at least came up to the expectations of my partner, who said, and almost swore, "I was prime at it;" while, stimulated, to her utmost exertions, she herself frisked like a kid, snapped her fingers like castanets, whooped like a Bacchanal, and bounded from the floor like a tennis-ball,—ay, till the colour of her garters was no particular mystery. She made the less secret of this, perhaps, that they were sky-blue, and fringed with silver.

The time has been that this would have been special fun; or rather, last night was the only time I can recollect these four years when it would *not* have been so; yet, at this moment, I cannot tell you how I longed to be rid of Dame Martin. I almost wished she would sprain one of those "many-twinkling" ankles, which served her so alertly; and when, in the midst of her exuberant caprioling, I saw my former partner leaving the apartment, and with eyes, as I thought, turning towards me, this unwillingness to carry on the dance increased to such a point, that I was almost about to feign a sprain or a dislocation myself, in order to put an end to the performance. But there were around me scores of old women, all of whom looked as if they might have some sovereign recipe for such an accident; and, remembering Gil Blas and his pretended disorder in the robbers' cavern, I thought it as wise to play Dame Martin fair, and dance till she thought proper to dismiss me. What I did I resolved to do strenuously, and in the latter part of the exhibition, I cut and sprang

from the floor as high and as perpendicularly as Dame Martin herself; and received, I promise you, thunders of applause, for the common people always prefer exertion and agility to grace. At length Dame Martin could dance no more, and, rejoicing at my release, I led her to a seat, and took the privilege of a partner to attend her.

"Hegh, sirs," exclaimed Dame Martin, "I am sair forfoughen! Troth, callant, I think ye hae been amaist the death o' me."

I could only atone for the alleged offence by fetching her some refreshment, of which she readily partook.

"I have been lucky in my partners," I said, "first that pretty young lady, and then you, Mrs. Martin."

"Hout wi' your fleeching," said Dame Martin. "Gae wa—gae wa, lad; dinna blaw in folk's lugs that gate; me and Miss Lilias even'd thegither! Na, na, lad —od, she is maybe four or five years younger than the like o' me,—bye and attour her gentle havings."

"She is the Laird's daughter?" said I, in as careless a tone of inquiry as I could assume.

"His daughter, man? Na, na, only his niece—and sib aneugh to him, I think."

"Ay, indeed," I replied; "I thought she had borne his name?"

"She bears her ain name, and that's Lilias."

"And has she no other name?" asked I.

"What needs she another till she gets a gudeman?" answered my Thetis a little miffed perhaps—to use the women's phrase—that I turned the conversation upon my former partner, rather than addressed it to herself.

There was a little pause, which was interrupted by Dame Martin observing, "They are standing up again."

"True," said I, having no mind to renew my late violent *capriole*, "and I must go help old Willie."

Ere I could extricate myself, I heard poor Thetis address herself to a sort of Mer-man in a jacket of seaman's blue, and a pair of trousers (whose hand, by the way, she had rejected at an earlier part of the evening), and intimate that she was now disposed to take a trip.

"Trip away then, dearie," said the vindictive man of the waters, without offering his hand; "there" pointing to the floor, "is a roomy berth for you."

Certain I had made one enemy, and perhaps two, I hastened to my original seat beside Willie, and began to handle my bow. But I could see that my conduct had made an unfavourable impression; the words, "flory conceited chap,"—"hafflins gentle," and at length, the still more alarming epithet of "spy," began to be buzzed about, and I was heartily glad when the apparition of Sam's visage at the door, who was already possessed of and draining a can of punch, gave me assurance that my means of retreat were at hand. I intimated as much to Willie, who probably had heard more of the murmurs of the company than I had, for he whispered, "Ay, ay—awa wi' ye—ower lang here—slide out canny —dinna let them see ye are on the tramp."

I slipped half-a-guinea into the old man's hand, who answered, "Truts! pruts! nonsense! but I'se no refuse, trusting ye can afford it.—Awa wi' ye—and if ony body stops ye, cry on me."

I glided, by his advice, along the room as if looking for a partner, joined Sam, whom I disengaged with some difficulty from his can, and we left the cottage together in a manner to attract the least possible observation. The horses were tied in a neighbouring shed and as the moon was up and I was now familiar with the road, broken and complicated as it is, we soon reached the Shepherd's Bush, where the old landlady was sitting up waiting for us, under some anxiety of mind, to account for which she did not hesitate to tell me that some folks had gone to Brokenburn from her house, or neighbouring towns, that did not come so safe back again. "Wandering Willie," she said, "was doubtless a kind of protection."

Here Willie's wife, who was smoking in the chimney corner, took up the praises of her "hinnie," as she called him, and endeavoured to awaken my generosity afresh, by describing the dangers from which, as she was pleased to allege, her husband's countenance had assuredly been the means of preserving me. I was not, however, to be fooled out of more money at this time, and went to bed in haste, full of various cogitations.

I have since spent a couple of days betwixt Mount Sharon and this place, and betwixt reading, writing to thee this momentous history, forming plans for seeing the lovely Lilias, and—partly, I think, for the sake of contradiction—angling a little in spite of Joshua's scruples—though I am rather liking the amusement better as I begin to have some success in it.

And now, my dearest Alan, you are in full pos-

session of my secret—let me as frankly into the recesses of your bosom. How do you feel towards this fair ignis fatuus, this lily of the desert? Tell me honestly; for however the recollection of her may haunt my own mind, my love for Alan Fairford surpasses the love of woman. I know, too, that when you *do* love it will be to

"Love once and love no more."

A deep-consuming passion, once kindled in a breast so steady as yours, would never be extinguished but with life. I am of another and more volatile temper, and though I shall open your next with a trembling hand, and uncertain heart, yet let it bring a frank confession that this fair unknown has made a deeper impression on your gravity than you reckoned for, and you will see I can tear the arrow from my own wound, barb and all. In the meantime, though I have formed schemes once more to see her, I will, you may rely on it, take no step for putting them into practice. I have refrained from this hitherto, and I give you my word of honour, I shall continue to do so; yet why should you need any further assurance from one who is so entirely yours as

D. L.

P. S.—I shall be on thorns till I receive your answer. I read and re-read your letter, and cannot for my soul discover what your real sentiments are. Sometimes I think you write of her as one in jest—and sometimes I think that cannot be. Put me at ease as soon as possible.

LETTER THE THIRTEENTH.

ALAN FAIRFORD TO DARSIE LATIMER.

I WRITE on the instant, as you direct; and in a tragi-comic humour, for I have a tear in my eye, and a smile on my cheek. Dearest Darsie, sure never a being but yourself could be so generous—sure never a being but yourself could be so absurd! I remember when you were a boy you wished to make your fine new whip a present to old aunt Peggy, merely because she admired it; and now, with like unreflecting and unappropriate liberality, you would resign your beloved to a smoke-dried young sophister, who cares not one of the hairs which it is his occupation to split, for all the daughters of Eve. *I* in love with your Lilias—your green-mantle —your unknown enchantress!—why I scarce saw her for five minutes, and even then only the tip of her chin was distinctly visible. She was well made, and the tip of her chin was of a most promising cast for the rest of the face; but, Heaven save you! she came upon business! and for a lawyer to fall in love with a pretty client on a single consultation, would be as wise as if he became enamoured of a particularly bright sunbeam which chanced for a moment to gild his bar-wig. I

give you my word I am heart-whole; and moreover, I assure you, that before I suffer a woman to sit near my heart's core, I must see her full face, without mask or mantle, ay, and know a good deal of her mind into the bargain. So never fret yourself on my account, my kind and generous Darsie; but, for your own sake, have a care, and let not an idle attachment, so lightly taken up, lead you into serious danger.

On this subject I feel so apprehensive, that now when I am decorated with the honours of the gown, I should have abandoned my career at the very starting to come to you, but for my father having contrived to clog my heels with fetters of a professional nature. I will tell you the matter at length, for it is comical enough; and why should not you list to my juridical adventures, as well as I to those of your fiddling knight-errantry?

It was after dinner, and I was considering how I might best introduce to my father the private resolution I had formed to set off for Dumfries-shire, or whether I had not better run away at once, and plead my excuse by letter, when, assuming the peculiar look with which he communicates any of his intentions respecting me, that he suspects may not be altogether acceptable, "Alan," he said, "ye now wear a gown—ye have opened shop, as we would say of a more mechanical profession; and, doubtless, ye think the floor of the courts is strewed with guineas, and that ye have only to stoop down to gather them?"

"I hope I am sensible, sir," I replied, "that I have

some knowledge and practice to acquire, and must stoop for that in the first place."

"It is well said," answered my father; and always afraid to give too much encouragement, added, "Very well said, if it be well acted up to—Stoop to get knowledge and practice is the very word. Ye know very well, Alan, that in the other faculty who study the *Ars medendi*, before the young doctor gets to the bedsides of palaces, he must, as they call it, walk the hospitals; and cure Lazarus of his sores, before he be admitted to prescribe for Dives, when he has gout or indigestion——"

"I am aware, sir, that——"

"Whist—do not interrupt the court—Well—also the chirurgeons have a useful practice, by which they put their apprentices and *tyrones* to work upon senseless dead bodies, to which, as they can do no good, so they certainly can do as little harm; while at the same time the *tyro*, or apprentice, gains experience, and becomes fit to whip off a leg or arm from a living subject, as cleanly as ye would slice an onion."

"I believe I guess your meaning, sir," answered I; "and were it not for a very particular engagement——"

"Do not speak to me of engagements; but whist—there is a good lad—and do not interrupt the court."

My father, you know, is apt—be it said with all filial duty—to be a little prolix in his harangues. I had nothing for it but to lean back and listen.

"Maybe you think, Alan, because I have, doubtless, the management of some actions in dependence, whilk

my worthy clients have intrusted me with, that I may think of airting them your way *instanter;* and so setting you up in practice, so far as my small business or influence may go; and doubtless, Alan, that is a day whilk I hope may come round. But then, before I give, as the proverb hath it, 'My own fish-guts to my own sea-maws,' I must, for the sake of my own character, be very sure that my sea-maw can pick them to some purpose. What say ye?"

"I am so far," answered I, "from wishing to get early into practice, sir, that I would willingly bestow a few days——"

"In farther study, ye would say, Alan. But that is not the way either—ye must walk the hospitals—ye must cure Lazarus—ye must cut and carve on a departed subject, to shew your skill."

"I am sure," I replied, "I will undertake the cause of any poor man with pleasure, and bestow as much pains upon it as if it were a Duke's; but for the next two or three days——"

"They must be devoted to close study, Alan—very close study indeed; for ye must stand primed for a hearing, *in presentia Dominorum*, upon Tuesday next."

"I, sir?" I replied in astonishment—"I have not opened my mouth in the Outer-House yet!"

"Never mind the Court of the Gentiles, man," said my father; "we will have you into the Sanctuary at once—over shoes, over boots."

"But, sir, I should really spoil any cause thrust on me so hastily."

"Ye cannot spoil it, Alan," said my father, rubbing his hands with much complacency; "that is the very cream of the business, man—it is just, as I said before, a subject upon whilk all the *tyrones* have been trying their whittles for fifteen years; and as there have been about ten or a dozen agents concerned, and each took his own way, the case is come to that pass, that Stair or Arniston could not mend it; and I do not think even you, Alan, can do it much harm—ye may get credit by it, but ye can lose none."

"And pray what is the name of my happy client, sir?" said I, ungraciously enough, I believe.

"It is a well-known name in the Parliament-House," replied my father. "To say the truth, I expect him every moment; it is Peter Peebles."*

"Peter Peebles!" exclaimed I, in astonishment; "he is an insane beggar—as poor as Job, and as mad as a March hare!"

"He has been pleaing in the court for fifteen years," said my father, in a tone of commiseration, which seemed to acknowledge that this fact was enough to account for the poor man's condition both in mind and circumstances.

"Besides, sir," I added, "he is on the Poor's Roll; and you know there are advocates regularly appointed to manage those cases; and for me to presume to interfere——"

"Whisht, Alan!—never interrupt the court—all *that* is managed for ye like a tee'd ball;" (my father

* Note D. Peter Peebles.

sometimes draws his similes from his once favourite game of golf);—"you must know, Alan, that Peter's cause was to have been opened by young Dumtoustie —ye may ken the lad, a son of Dumtoustie of that ilk, member of Parliament for the county of——, and a nephew of the laird's younger brother, worthy Lord Bladderskate, whilk ye are aware sounds as like being akin to a peatship* and a sheriffdom, as a sieve is sib to a riddle. Now, Peter Drudgeit, my lord's clerk, came to me this morning in the House, like ane bereft of his wits; for it seems that young Dumtoustie is ane of the Poor's Lawyers, and Peter Peebles's process had been remitted to him of course. But so soon as the harebrained goose saw the pokes,† (as, indeed, Alan, they are none of the least), he took fright, called for his nag, lap on, and away to the country is he gone; and so, said Peter, my lord is at his wit's end wi' vexation and shame, to see his nevoy break off the course at the very starting. 'I'll tell you, Peter,' said I, 'were I my lord, and a friend or kinsman of mine should leave the town while the court was sitting, that kinsman, or be he what he liked, should never darken my door again.' And then, Alan, I thought to turn the ball our own way; and I said that you were a gey sharp birkie, just off the irons, and if it would oblige my lord, and so forth, you would open Peter's

* Formerly, a lawyer, supposed to be under the peculiar patronage of any particular judge, was invidiously termed his *peat* or *pet*.

† Process-bags.

cause on Tuesday, and make some handsome apology for the necessary absence of your learned friend, and the loss which your client and the court had sustained, and so forth. Peter lap at the proposition, like a cock at a grossart; for, he said, the only chance was to get a new hand, that did not ken the charge he was taking upon him; for there was not a lad of two Sessions' standing that was not dead-sick of Peter Peebles and his cause; and he advised me to break the matter gently to you at the first; but I told him you were a good bairn, Alan, and had no will and pleasure in these matters but mine."

What could I say, Darsie, in answer to this arrangement, so very well meant—so very vexatious at the same time?—To imitate the defection and flight of young Dumtoustie, was at once to destroy my father's hopes of me for ever; nay, such is the keenness with which he regards all connected with his profession, it might have been a step to breaking his heart. I was obliged, therefore, to bow in sad acquiescence, when my father called to James Wilkinson to bring the two bits of pokes he would find on his table.

Exit James, and presently re-enters, bending under the load of two huge leathern bags, full of papers to the brim, and labelled on the greasy backs with the magic impress of the clerks of court, and the title, *Peebles against Plainstanes.* This huge mass was deposited on the table, and my father, with no ordinary glee in his countenance, began to draw out the various bundles of papers, secured by none of your red tape or

whipcord, but stout, substantial casts of tarred rope, such as might have held small craft at their moorings.

I made a last and desperate effort to get rid of the impending job. "I am really afraid, sir, that this case seems so much complicated, and there is so little time to prepare, that we had better move the Court to supersede it till next Session."

"How, sir?—how, Alan?" said my father—"Would you approbate and reprobate, sir?—You have accepted the poor man's cause, and if you have not his fee in your pocket, it is because he has none to give you; and now would you approbate and reprobate in the same breath of your mouth?—Think of your oath of office, Alan, and your duty to your father, my dear boy."

Once more, what could I say?—I saw, from my father's hurried and alarmed manner, that nothing could vex him so much as failing in the point he had determined to carry, and once more intimated my readiness to do my best, under every disadvantage.

"Well, well, my boy," said my father, "the Lord will make your days long in the land, for the honour you have given to your father's gray hairs. You may find wiser advisers, Alan, but none that can wish you better."

My father, you know, does not usually give way to expressions of affection, and they are interesting in proportion to their rarity. My eyes began to fill at seeing his glisten; and my delight at having given him such sensible gratification would have been unmixed, but for

the thoughts of you. These out of the question, I could have grappled with the bags, had they been as large as corn-sacks. But, to turn what was grave into farce, the door opened, and Wilkinson ushered in Peter Peebles.

You must have seen this original, Darsie, who, like others in the same predicament, continues to haunt the courts of justice, where he has made shipwreck of time, means, and understanding. Such insane paupers have sometimes seemed to me to resemble wrecks lying upon the shoals on the Goodwin Sands, or in Yarmouth Roads, warning other vessels to keep aloof from the banks on which they have been lost; or rather such ruined clients are like scarecrows and potato-bogles, distributed through the courts to scare away fools from the scene of litigation.

The identical Peter wears a huge great-coat, threadbare and patched itself, yet carefully so disposed and secured by what buttons remain, and many supplementary pins, as to conceal the still more infirm state of his under garments. The shoes and stockings of a ploughman were, however, seen to meet at his knees, with a pair of brownish, blackish breeches; a rusty-coloured handkerchief, that has been black in its day, surrounded his throat, and was an apology for linen. His hair, half gray, half black, escaped in elf-locks around a huge wig, made of tow, as it seemed to me, and so much shrunk, that it stood up on the very top of his head; above which he plants, when covered, an immense cocked hat, which, like the chieftain's banner

in an ancient battle, may be seen any sederunt day betwixt nine and ten, high towering above all the fluctuating and changeful scene in the Outer-House, where his eccentricities often make him the centre of a group of petulant and teasing boys, who exercise upon him every art of ingenious torture. His countenance, originally that of a portly, comely burgess, is now emaciated with poverty and anxiety, and rendered wild by an insane lightness about the eyes; a withered and blighted skin and complexion; features begrimed with snuff, charged with the self-importance peculiar to insanity; and a habit of perpetually speaking to himself. Such was my unfortunate client; and I must allow, Darsie, that my profession had need to do a great deal of good, if, as is much to be feared, it brings many individuals to such a pass.

After we had been, with a good deal of form, presented to each other, at which time I easily saw by my father's manner that he was desirous of supporting Peter's character in my eyes, as much as circumstances would permit, "Alan," he said, "this is the gentleman who has agreed to accept of you as his counsel, in place of young Dumtoustie."

"Entirely out of favour to my old acquaintance your father," said Peter, with a benign and patronising countenance," out of respect to your father, and my old intimacy with Lord Bladderskate. Otherwise, by the *Regiam Majestatem !* I would have presented a petition and complaint against Daniel Dumtoustie, Advocate, by name and surname—I would, by all the practiques !

—I know the forms of process; and I am not to be trifled with."

My father here interrupted my client, and reminded him that there was a good deal of business to do, as he proposed to give the young counsel an outline of the state of the conjoined process, with a view to letting him into the merits of the cause, disencumbered from the points of form. "I have made a short abbreviate, Mr. Peebles," said he; "having sat up late last night, and employed much of this morning in wading through these papers, to save Alan some trouble, and I am now about to state the result."

"I will state it myself," said Peter, breaking in without reverence upon his solicitor.

"No, by no means," said my father; "I am your agent for the time."

"Mine eleventh in number," said Peter; "I have a new one every year; I wish I could get a new coat as regularly."

"Your agent for the time," resumed my father; "and you, who are acquainted with the forms, know that the client states the cause to the agent—the agent to the counsel——"

"The counsel to the Lord Ordinary," continued Peter, once set a-going, like the peal of an alarm clock, "the Ordinary to the Inner-House, the President to the Bench. It is just like the rope to the man, the man to the ox, the ox to the water, the water to the fire——"

"Hush, for Heaven's sake, Mr. Peebles," said my father, cutting his recitation short; "time wears on—

we must get to business—you must not interrupt the court, you know.—Hem, hem! From this abbreviate it appears——"

"Before you begin," said Peter Peebles, "I'll thank you to order me a morsel of bread and cheese, or some cauld meat, or broth, or the like alimentary provision; I was so anxious to see your son, that I could not eat a mouthful of dinner."

Heartily glad, I believe, to have so good a chance of stopping his client's mouth effectually, my father ordered some cold meat; to which James Wilkinson, for the honour of the house, was about to add the brandy bottle, which remained on the sideboard, but, at a wink from my father, supplied its place with small beer. Peter charged the provisions with the rapacity of a famished lion; and so well did the diversion engage him, that though, while my father stated the case, he looked at him repeatedly, as if he meant to interrupt his statement, yet he always found more agreeable employment for his mouth, and returned to the cold beef with an avidity which convinced me he had not had such an opportunity for many a day of satiating his appetite. Omitting much formal phraseology, and many legal details, I will endeavour to give you, in exchange for your fiddler's tale, the history of a litigant, or rather, the history of his lawsuit.

"Peter Peebles and Paul Plainstanes," said my father, "entered into partnership, in the year ——, as mercers and linendrapers, in the Luckenbooths, and carried on a great line of business to mutual advantage.

But the learned counsel needeth not to be told, *societas est mater discordiarum*, partnership oft makes pleaship. The company being dissolved by mutual consent in the year ——, the affairs had to be wound up, and after certain attempts to settle the matter extra-judicially, it was at last brought into the Court, and has branched out into several distinct processes, most of whilk have been conjoined by the Ordinary. It is to the state of these processes that counsel's attention is particularly directed. There is the original action of Peebles *v.* Plainstanes, convening him for payment of £3000, less or more, as alleged balance due by Plainstanes. 2dly, There is a counter action, in which Plainstanes is pursuer and Peebles defender, for £2500, less or more, being balance alleged *per contra*, to be due by Peebles. 3dly, Mr. Peebles's seventh agent advised an action of Compt and Reckoning at his instance, wherein what balance should prove due on either side might be fairly struck and ascertained. 4thly, To meet the hypothetical case, that Peebles might be found liable in a balance to Plainstanes, Mr. Wildgoose, Mr. Peebles's eighth agent, recommended a Multiplepoinding, to bring all parties concerned into the field."

My brain was like to turn at this account of lawsuit within lawsuit, like a nest of chip-boxes, with all of which I was expected to make myself acquainted.

"I understand," I said, "that Mr. Peebles claims a sum of money from Plainstanes—how then can he be his debtor? and if not his debtor, how can he bring a Multiplepoinding, the very summons of which sets forth,

that the pursuer does owe certain monies, which he is desirous to pay by warrant of a judge?"*

"Ye know little of the matter, I doubt, friend," said Mr. Peebles; "a Multiplepoinding is the safest *remedium juris* in the whole form of process. I have known it conjoined with a declarator of marriage.—Your beef is excellent," he said to my father, who in vain endeavoured to resume his legal disquisition; "but something highly powdered—and the twopenny is undeniable; but it is small swipes—small swipes—more of hop than malt—with your leave I'll try your black bottle."

My father started to help him with his own hand, and in due measure; but, infinitely to my amusement, Peter got possession of the bottle by the neck, and my father's ideas of hospitality were far too scrupulous to permit his attempting, by any direct means, to redeem it; so that Peter returned to the table triumphant, with his prey in his clutch.

"Better have a wine-glass, Mr. Peebles," said my father, in an admonitory tone, "you will find it pretty strong."

"If the kirk is ower muckle, we can sing mass in the quire," said Peter, helping himself in the goblet out of which he had been drinking the small beer. "What is it, usquebaugh?—BRANDY, as I am an honest man! I had almost forgotten the name and taste of brandy.—Mr. Fairford elder, your good health" (a mouthful of

* Multiplepoinding is, I believe, equivalent to what is called in England a case of Double Distress.

brandy)—"Mr. Alan Fairford, wishing you well through your arduous undertaking" (another go-down of the comfortable liquor). "And now, though you have given a tolerable breviate of this great lawsuit, of whilk every body has heard something that has walked the boards in the Outer-House (here's to ye again, by way of interim decreet), yet ye have omitted to speak a word of the arrestments."

"I was just coming to that point, Mr. Peebles."

"Or of the action of suspension of the charge on the bill."

"I was just coming to that."

"Or the advocation of the Sheriff-Court process."

"I was just coming to it."

"As Tweed comes to Melrose, I think," said the litigant; and then filling his goblet about a quarter full of brandy, as if in absence of mind, "Oh, Mr. Alan Fairford, ye are a lucky man to buckle to such a cause as mine at the very outset! it is like a specimen of all causes, man. By the Regiam, there is not a *remedium juris* in the practiques but ye'll find a spice o't. Here's to your getting weel through with it—Pshut—I am drinking naked spirits, I think. But if the heathen be ower strong, we'll christen him with the brewer" (here he added a little small beer to his beverage, paused, rolled his eyes, winked, and proceeded),—"Mr. Fairford—the action of assault and battery, Mr. Fairford, when I compelled the villain Plainstanes to pull my nose within two steps of King Charles's statue, in the Parliament Close—there I had him in a hose-net.

Never man could tell me how to shape that process—no counsel that ever selled wind could condescend and say whether it were best to proceed by way of petition and complaint, *ad vindictam publicam*, with consent of his Majesty's advocate, or by action on the statute for battery *pendente lite*, whilk would be the winning my plea at once, and so getting a back-door out of Court.—By the Regiam, that beef and brandy is unco het at my heart—I maun try the ale again" (sipped a little beer); "and the ale's but cauld, I maun e'en put in the rest of the brandy."

He was as good as his word, and proceeded in so loud and animated a style of elocution, thumping the table, drinking and snuffing alternately, that my father, abandoning all attempts to interrupt him, sat silent and ashamed, suffering and anxious for the conclusion of the scene.

"And then to come back to my pet process of all—my battery and assault process, when I had the good luck to provoke him to pull my nose at the very threshold of the Court, whilk was the very thing I wanted—Mr. Pest, ye ken him, Daddie Fairford? Old Pest was for making it out *hamesucken*, for he said the Court might be said—said—ugh!—to be my dwelling-place. I dwell mair there than ony gate else, and the essence of hamesucken is to strike a man in his dwelling-place—mind that, young advocate—and so there's hope Pláinstanes may be hanged, as many has for a less matter; for, my Lords,—will Pest say to the Justiciary bodies,—my Lords, the Parliament House is Peebles's

place of dwelling, says he—being *commune forum*, and *commune forum est commune domicilium*—Lass, fetch another glass of whisky, and score it—time to gae hame—by the practiques, I cannot find the jug—yet there's twa of them, I think. By the Regiam, Fairford—Daddie Fairford—lend us twal pennies to buy sneesh-ing, mine is done—Macer call another cause."

The box fell from his hands, and his body would at the same time have fallen from the chair, had not I supported him.

"This is intolerable," said my father—"Call a chair-man, James Wilkinson, to carry this degraded, worthless, drunken beast home."

When Peter Peebles was removed from this memor-able consultation, under the care of an ablebodied Celt, my father hastily bundled up the papers as a showman, whose exhibition has miscarried, hastes to remove his booth. "Here are my memoranda, Alan," he said, in a hurried way; "look them carefully over—compare them with the processes, and turn it in your head before Tuesday. Many a good speech has been made for a beast of a client; and hark ye, lad, hark ye—I never intended to cheat you of your fee when all was done, though I would have liked to have heard the speech first; but there is nothing like corning the horse before the journey. Here are five goud guineas in a silk purse—of your poor mother's netting, Alan—she would have been a blithe woman to have seen her young son with a gown on his back—but no more of that—be a good boy and to the work like a tiger."

I did set to work, Darsie; for who could resist such motives? With my father's assistance, I have mastered the details, confused as they are; and on Tuesday, I shall plead as well for Peter Peebles, as I could for a duke. Indeed, I feel my head so clear on the subject, as to be able to write this long letter to you; into which, however, Peter and his lawsuit have insinuated themselves so far as to shew you how much they at present occupy my thoughts. Once more, be careful of yourself, and mindful of me, who am ever thine, while

ALAN FAIRFORD.

From circumstances, to be hereafter mentioned, it was long ere this letter reached the person to whom it was addressed.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

NARRATIVE.

THE advantage of laying before the reader, in the words of the actors themselves, the adventures which we must otherwise have narrated in our own, has given great popularity to the publication of epistolary correspondence, as practised by various great authors, and by ourselves in the preceding chapters. Nevertheless, a genuine correspondence of this kind (and Heaven forbid it should be in any respect sophisticated by interpolations of our own!) can seldom be found to contain all in which it is necessary to instruct the reader for his full comprehension of the story. Also it must often happen that various prolixities and redundancies occur in the course of an interchange of letters, which must hang as a dead weight on the progress of the narrative. To avoid this dilemma, some biographers have used the letters of the personages concerned, or liberal extracts from them, to describe particular incidents, or express the sentiments which they entertained, while they connect them occasionally with such portions of narrative, as may serve to carry on the thread of the story.

It is thus that the adventurous travellers who

explore the summit of Mont Blanc, now move on through the crumbling snow-drift so slowly, that their progress is almost imperceptible, and anon abridge their journey by springing over the intervening chasms which cross their path, with the assistance of their pilgrim-staves. Or, to make a briefer simile, the course of story-telling which we have for the present adopted, resembles the original discipline of the dragoons, who were trained to serve either on foot or horseback, as the emergencies of the service required. With this explanation, we shall proceed to narrate some circumstances which Alan Fairford did not, and could not, write to his correspondent.

Our reader, we trust, has formed somewhat approaching to a distinct idea of the principal characters who have appeared before him during our narrative; but in case our good opinion of his sagacity has been exaggerated, and in order to satisfy such as are addicted to the laudable practice of *skipping* (with whom we have at times a strong fellow-feeling), the following particulars may not be superfluous.

Mr. Saunders Fairford, as he was usually called, was a man of business of the old school, moderate in his charges, economical and even niggardly in his expenditure, strictly honest in conducting his own affairs, and those of his clients, but taught by long experience to be wary and suspicious in observing the motions of others. Punctual as the clock of St. Giles tolled nine, the neat dapper form of the little hale old gentleman was seen at the threshold of the Court hall, or at farthest, at the

head of the Back Stairs, trimly dressed in a complete suit of snuff-coloured brown, with stockings of silk or woollen, as suited the weather; a bobwig, and a small cocked hat; shoes blacked as Warren would have blacked them; silver shoe-buckles, and a gold stock-buckle. A nosegay in summer, and a sprig of holly in winter, completed his well-known dress and appearance. His manners corresponded with his attire, for they were scrupulously civil, and not a little formal. He was an elder of the kirk, and, of course, zealous for King George and the government even to slaying, as he had shewed by taking up arms in their cause. But then, as he had clients and connections of business among families of opposite political tenets, he was particularly cautious to use all the conventional phrases which the civility of the time had devised, as an admissible mode of language betwixt the two parties. Thus he spoke sometimes of the Chevalier, but never either of the Prince, which would have been sacrificing his own principles, or of the Pretender, which would have been offensive to those of others. Again, he usually designated the Rebellion as the *affair* of 1745, and spoke of any one engaged in it as a person who had been *out* at a certain period.* So that, on the whole, Mr. Fairford was a man much liked and respected on all sides, though his friends would not have been

* Old-Fashioned Scottish Civility.—Such were literally the points of politeness observed in general society during the author's youth, where it was by no means unusual in a company assembled by chance, to find individuals who had borne arms on one side or

sorry if he had given a dinner more frequently, as his little cellar contained some choice old wine, of which, on such rare occasions, he was no niggard.

The whole pleasure of this good old-fashioned man of method, besides that which he really felt in the discharge of his daily business, was the hope to see his son Alan, the only fruit of a union which death early dissolved, attain what in the father's eyes was the proudest of all distinctions—the rank and fame of a well-employed lawyer.

Every profession has its peculiar honours, and Mr. Fairford's mind was constructed upon so limited and exclusive a plan, that he valued nothing, save the objects of ambition which his own presented. He would have shuddered at Alan's acquiring the renown of a hero, and laughed with scorn at the equally barren laurels of literature; it was by the path of the law alone that he was desirous to see him rise to eminence, and the probabilities of success or disappointment were the thoughts of his father by day, and his dream by night.

The disposition of Alan Fairford, as well as his talents, were such as to encourage his father's expectations. He had acuteness of intellect, joined to habits of long and patient study, improved no doubt by the discipline of his father's house; to which, generally

other in the civil broils of 1745. Nothing, according to my recollection, could be more gentle and decorous than the respect these old enemies paid to each other's prejudices. But in this I speak generally. I have witnessed one or two explosions.

speaking, he conformed with the utmost docility, expressing no wish for greater or more frequent relaxation than consisted with his father's anxious and severe restrictions. When he did indulge in any juvenile frolics, his father had the candour to lay the whole blame upon his more mercurial companion, Darsie Latimer.

This youth, as the reader must be aware, had been received as an inmate into the family of Mr. Fairford, senior, at a time when some of the delicacy of constitution which had abridged the life of his consort, began to shew itself in the son, and when the father was, of course, peculiarly disposed to indulge his slightest wish. That the young Englishman was able to pay a considerable board, was a matter of no importance to Mr. Fairford; it was enough that his presence seemed to make his son cheerful and happy. He was compelled to allow that "Darsie was a fine lad, though unsettled," and he would have had some difficulty in getting rid of him, and the apprehensions which his levities excited, had it not been for the voluntary excursion which gave rise to the preceding correspondence, and in which Mr. Fairford secretly rejoiced, as affording the means of separating Alan from his gay companion, at least until he should have assumed, and become accustomed to, the duties of his dry and laborious profession.

But the absence of Darsie was far from promoting the end which the elder Mr. Fairford had expected and desired. The young men were united by the closest bonds of intimacy; and the more so, that neither of

them sought nor desired to admit any others into their society. Alan Fairford was averse to general company, from a disposition naturally reserved, and Darsie Latimer from a painful sense of his own unknown origin, peculiarly afflicting in a country where high and low are professed genealogists. The young men were all in all to each other; it is no wonder, therefore, that their separation was painful, and that its effects upon Alan Fairford, joined to the anxiety occasioned by the tenor of his friend's letters, greatly exceeded what the senior had anticipated. The young man went through his usual duties, his studies, and the examinations to which he was subjected, but with nothing like the zeal and assiduity which he had formerly displayed; and his anxious and observant father saw but too plainly that his heart was with his absent comrade.

A philosopher would have given way to this tide of feeling, in hopes to have diminished its excess, and permitted the youths to have been some time together, that their intimacy might have been broken off by degrees; but Mr. Fairford only saw the more direct mode of continued restraint, which, however, he was desirous of veiling under some plausible pretext. In the anxiety which he felt on this occasion, he had held communication with an old acquaintance, Peter Drudgeit, with whom the reader is partly acquainted. "Alan," he said, "was ance wud, and aye waur; and he was expecting every moment when he would start off in a wild-goose chase after the callant Latimer;

Will Sampson, the horse-hirer in Candlemaker-Row, had given him a hint that Alan had been looking for a good hack, to go to the country for a few days. And then to oppose him downright—he could not but think on the way his poor mother was removed—Would to Heaven he was yoked to some tight piece of business, no matter whether well or ill paid, but some job that would hamshackle him at least until the Courts rose, if it were but for decency's sake."

Peter Drudgeit sympathized, for Peter had a son, who, reason or none, would needs exchange the torn and inky fustian sleeves for the blue jacket and white lapelle; and he suggested, as the reader knows, the engaging our friend Alan in the matter of Poor Peter Peebles, just opened by the desertion of young Dumtoustie, whose defection would be at the same time concealed; and this, Drudgeit said, "would be felling two dogs with one stone."

With these explanations, the reader will hold a man of the elder Fairford's sense and experience free from the hazardous and impatient curiosity with which boys fling a puppy into a deep pond, merely to see if the creature can swim. However confident in his son's talents, which were really considerable, he would have been very sorry to have involved him in the duty of pleading a complicated and difficult case, upon his very first appearance at the bar, had he not resorted to it as an effectual way to prevent the young man from taking a step, which his habits of thinking represented as a most fatal one at his outset of life.

Betwixt two evils, Mr. Fairford chose that which was in his own apprehension the least; and, like a brave officer sending forth his son to battle, rather chose he should die upon the breach, than desert the conflict with dishonour. Neither did he leave him to his own unassisted energies. Like Alpheus preceding Hercules, he himself encountered the Augean mass of Peter Peebles's law-matters. It was to the old man a labour of love to place in a clear and undistorted view the real merits of this case, which the carelessness and blunders of Peter's former solicitors had converted into a huge chaotic mass of unintelligible technicality; and such was his skill and industry, that he was able, after the severe toil of two or three days, to present to the consideration of the young counsel the principal facts of the case, in a light equally simple and comprehensible. With the assistance of a solicitor so affectionate and indefatigable, Alan Fairford was enabled, when the day of trial arrived, to walk towards the Court, attended by his anxious yet encouraging parent, with some degree of confidence that he would lose no reputation upon this arduous occasion.

They were met at the door of the Court by Poor Peter Peebles in his usual plenitude of wig and celsitude of hat. He seized on the young pleader like a lion on his prey. "How is a' wi' you, Mr. Alan—how is a' wi' you, man?—The awfu' day is come at last—a day that will be lang minded in this house. Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstanes—conjoined processes—Hearing in presence—stands for the Short Roll for this

day—I have not been able to sleep for a week for thinking of it, and, I dare to say, neither has the Lord President himsell—for such a cause!! But your father garr'd me tak a wee drap ower muckle of his pint bottle the other night; it's no right to mix brandy wi' business, Mr. Fairford. I would have been the waur o' liquor if I would have drunk as muckle as you twa would have had me. But there's a time for a' things, and if ye will dine with me after the case is heard, or whilk is the same, or maybe better, *I'll* gang my ways hame wi' *you*, and I winna object to a cheerfu' glass, within the bounds of moderation."

Old Fairford shrugged his shoulders and hurried past the client, saw his son wrapt in the sable bombazine, which, in his eyes, was more venerable than an archbishop's lawn, and could not help fondly patting his shoulder, and whispering to him to take courage, and shew he was worthy to wear it. The party entered the Outer Hall of the Court (once the place of meeting of the ancient Scottish Parliament), and which corresponds to the use of Westminster Hall in England, serving as a vestibule to the Inner-House, as it is termed, and a place of dominion to certain sedentary personages called Lords Ordinary.

The earlier part of the morning was spent by old Fairford in reiterating his instructions to Alan, and in running from one person to another, from whom he thought he could still glean some grains of information, either concerning the point at issue, or collateral cases. Meantime, Poor Peter Peebles, whose shallow brain

was altogether unable to bear the importance of the moment, kept as close to his young counsel as shadow to substance, affected now to speak loud, now to whisper in his ear, now to deck his ghastly countenance with wreathed smiles, now to cloud it with a shade of deep and solemn importance, and anon to contort it with the sneer of scorn and derision. These moods of the client's mind were accompanied with singular "mockings and mowings," fantastic gestures, which the man of rags and litigation deemed appropriate to his changes of countenance. Now he brandished his arm aloft, now thrust his fist straight out, as if to knock his opponent down. Now he laid his open palm on his bosom, and now flinging it abroad, he gallantly snapped his fingers in the air.

These demonstrations, and the obvious shame and embarrassment of Alan Fairford, did not escape the observation of the juvenile idlers in the hall. They did not, indeed, approach Peter with their usual familiarity, from some feeling of deference towards Fairford, though many accused him of conceit in presuming to undertake, at this early stage of his practice, a case of considerable difficulty. But Alan, notwithstanding this forbearance, was not the less sensible that he and his companion were the subjects of many a passing jest, and many a shout of laughter, with which that region at all times abounds.

At length the young counsel's patience gave way, and as it threatened to carry his presence of mind and recollection along with it, Alan frankly told his father,

that unless he was relieved from the infliction of his client's personal presence and instructions, he must necessarily throw up his brief, and decline pleading the case.

"Hush, hush, my dear Alan," said the old gentleman, almost at his own wit's end upon hearing this dilemma; "dinna mind the silly ne'er-do-weel; we cannot keep the man from hearing his own cause though he be not quite right in the head."

"On my life, sir," answered Alan, "I shall be unable to go on, he drives every thing out of my remembrance; and if I attempt to speak seriously of the injuries he has sustained, and the condition he is reduced to, how can I expect but that the very appearance of such an absurd scarecrow will turn it all into ridicule?"

"There is something in that," said Saunders Fairford, glancing a look at Poor Peter, and then cautiously inserting his forefinger under his bobwig, in order to rub his temple and aid his invention; "he is no figure for the fore-bar to see without laughing; but how to get rid of him? To speak sense, or anything like it, is the last thing he will listen to. Stay, ay—Alan, my darling, hae patience; I'll get him off on the instant, like a gowff ba'."

So saying, he hastened to his ally, Peter Drudgeit, who, on seeing him with marks of haste in his gait, and care upon his countenance, clapped his pen behind his ear, with "What's the stir now, Mr. Saunders?—Is there aught wrang?"

"Here's a dollar, man," said Mr. Saunders, "now, or never, Peter, do me a good turn. Yonder's your namesake, Peter Peebles, will drive the swine through our bonny hanks of yarn;* get him over to John's Coffee-house, man—gie him his meridian—keep him there, drunk or sober, till the hearing is ower."

"Eneugh said," quoth Peter Drudgeit, no way displeased with his own share in the service required, —"We'se do your bidding."

Accordingly, the scribe was presently seen whispering in the ear of Peter Peebles, whose responses came forth in the following broken form:—

"Leave the Court for ae minute on this great day of judgment?—not I, by the Reg——Eh! what? Brandy, did ye say—French Brandy?—couldna ye fetch a stoup to the bar under your coat, man?—Impossible? Na, if it's clean impossible, and if we have an hour good till they get through the single bills and the summar-roll, I carena if I cross the close wi' you; I am sure I need something to keep my heart up this awful day; but I'll no stay above an instant—not above a minute of time—nor drink aboon a single gill."

In a few minutes afterwards, the two Peters were seen moving through the Parliament Close (which new-

* The simile is obvious, from the old manufacture of Scotland, when the guid-wife's thrift, as the yarn wrought in the winter was called, when laid down to bleach by the burn-side, was peculiarly exposed to the inroads of pigs, seldom well regulated about a Scottish farm-house.

fangled affectation has termed a Square), the triumphant Drudgeit leading captive the passive Peebles, whose legs conducted him towards the dram-shop, while his reverted eyes were fixed upon the Court. They dived into the Cimmerian abysses of John's Coffee-house,* formerly the favourite rendezvous of the classical and genial Doctor Pitcairn, and were for the present seen no more.

Relieved from his tormentor, Allan Fairford had time to rally his recollections, which, in the irritation of his spirits, had nearly escaped him, and to prepare himself for a task, the successful discharge or failure in which must, he was aware, have the deepest influence upon his fortunes. He had pride, was not without a consciousness of talent, and the sense of his father's feelings upon the subject impelled him to the utmost exertion. Above all, he had that sort of self-command which is essential to success in every arduous

* This small dark coffeehouse, now burnt down, was the resort of such writers and clerks belonging to the Parliament House above thirty years ago, as retained the ancient Scottish custom of a meridian, as it was called, or noontide dram of spirits. If their proceedings were watched, they might be seen to turn fidgety about the hour of noon, and exchange looks with each other from their separate desks, till at length some one of formal and dignified presence assumed the honour of leading the band, when away they went, threading the crowd like a string of wild-fowl, crossed the square or close, and following each other into the coffee-house, received in turn from the hand of the waiter the meridian, which was placed ready at the bar. This they did, day by day: and though they did not speak to each other, they seemed to attach a certain degree of sociability to performing the ceremony in company.

undertaking, and he was constitutionally free from that feverish irritability, by which those whose over-active imaginations exaggerate difficulties, render themselves incapable of encountering such when they arrive.

Having collected all the scattered and broken associations which were necessary, Alan's thoughts reverted to Dumfries-shire, and the precarious situation in which he feared his beloved friend had placed himself; and once and again he consulted his watch, eager to have his present task commenced and ended, that he might hasten to Darsie's assistance. The hour and moment at length arrived. The Macer shouted with all his well remembered brazen strength of lungs, "Poor Peter Peebles *versus* Plainstains, *per* Dumtoustie *et* Tough :— Maister Da-a-niel Dumtoustie!" Dumtoustie answered not the summons, which, deep and swelling as it was, could not reach across the Queensferry; but our Maister Alan Fairford appeared in his place.

The Court was very much crowded; for much amusement had been received on former occasions when Peter had volunteered his own oratory, and had been completely successful in routing the gravity of the whole procedure, and putting to silence, not indeed the counsel of the opposite party, but his own.

Both bench and audience seemed considerably surprised at the juvenile appearance of the young man who appeared in the room of Dumtoustie, for the purpose of opening this complicated and long depending process, and the common herd were disappointed at the absence of Peter the client, the Punchinello of the expected

entertainment. The Judges looked with a very favourable countenance on our friend Alan, most of them being acquainted, more or less, with so old a practitioner as his father, and all, or almost all, affording, from civility, the same fair play to the first pleading of a counsel, which the House of Commons yields to the maiden speech of one of its members.

Lord Bladderskate was an exception to this general expression of benevolence. He scowled upon Alan from beneath his large, shaggy, grey eyebrows, just as if the young lawyer had been usurping his nephew's honours, instead of covering his disgrace; and, from feelings which did his lordship little honour, he privately hoped the young man would not succeed in the cause which his kinsman had abandoned.

Even Lord Bladderskate, however, was, in spite of himself, pleased with the judicious and modest tone in which Alan began his address to the Court, apologizing for his own presumption, and excusing it by the sudden illness of his learned brother, for whom the labour of opening a cause of some difficulty and importance had been much more worthily designed. He spoke of himself as he really was, and of young Dumtoustie as what he ought to have been, taking care not to dwell on either topic a moment longer than was necessary. The old Judge's looks became benign; his family pride was propitiated, and, pleased equally with the modesty and civility of the young man whom he had thought forward and officious, he relaxed the scorn of his features into an expression of profound attention; the highest com-

pliment, and the greatest encouragement, which a judge can render to the counsel addressing him.

Having succeeded in securing the favourable attention of the Court, the young lawyer, using the lights which his father's experience and knowledge of business had afforded him, proceeded with an address and clearness, unexpected from one of his years, to remove from the case itself those complicated formalities with which it had been loaded, as a surgeon strips from a wound the dressings which had been hastily wrapped round it, in order to proceed to his cure *secundum artem*. Developed of the cumbrous and complicated technicalities of litigation, with which the perverse obstinacy of the client, the inconsiderate haste or ignorance of his agents, and the evasions of a subtle adversary, had invested the process, the cause of Poor Peter Peebles, standing upon its simple merits, was no bad subject for the declamation of a young counsel, nor did our friend Alan fail to avail himself of its strong points.

He exhibited his client as a simple-hearted, honest, well-meaning man, who, during a copartnership of twelve years, had gradually become impoverished, while his partner (his former clerk), having no funds but his share of the same business, into which he had been admitted without any advance of stock, had become gradually more and more wealthy.

"Their association," said Alan, and the little flight was received with some applause, "resembled the ancient story of the fruit which was carved with a knife poisoned on one side of the blade only, so that the

individual to whom the envenomed portion was served, drew decay and death from what afforded savour and sustenance to the consumer of the other moiety." He then plunged boldly into the *mare magnum* of accompts between the parties; he pursued each false statement from the waste-book to the day-book, from the day-book to the bill-book, from the bill-book to the ledger; placed the artful interpolations and insertions of the fallacious Plainstanes in array against each other, and against the fact; and availing himself to the utmost of his father's previous labours, and his own knowledge of accompts, in which he had been sedulously trained, he laid before the Court a clear and intelligible statement of the affairs of the copartnery, shewing, with precision, that a large balance must, at the dissolution, have been due to his client, sufficient to have enabled him to have carried on business on his own account, and thus to have retained his situation in society, as an independent and industrious tradesman. "But instead of this justice being voluntarily rendered by the former clerk to his former master,—by the party obliged to his benefactor,—by one honest man to another,—his wretched client had been compelled to follow his quondam clerk, his present debtor, from Court to Court; had found his just claims met with well-invented but unfounded counter-claims, had seen his party shift his character of pursuer or defender, as often as Harlequin effects his transformations, till, in a chase so varied and so long, the unhappy litigant had lost substance, reputation, and almost the use of reason itself,

and came before their Lordships an object of thoughtless derision to the unreflecting, of compassion to the better-hearted, and of awful meditation to every one, who considered that, in a country where excellent laws were administered by upright and incorruptible judges, a man might pursue an almost indisputable claim through all the mazes of litigation; lose fortune, reputation, and reason itself in the chase, and now come before the Supreme Court of his country in the wretched condition of his unhappy client, a victim to protracted justice, and to that hope delayed which sickens the heart."

The force of this appeal to feeling made as much impression on the Bench, as had been previously effected by the clearness of Alan's argument. The absurd form of Peter himself, with his tow-wig, was fortunately not present to excite any ludicrous emotion, and the pause that took place when the young lawyer had concluded his speech, was followed by a murmur of approbation, which the ears of his father drank in as the sweetest sounds that had ever entered them. Many a hand of gratulation was thrust out to his grasp, trembling as it was with anxiety, and finally with delight; his voice faltering, as he replied, "Ay, ay, I kend Alan was the lad to make a spoon or spoil a horn."*

The counsel on the other side arose, an old practitioner, who had noted too closely the impression made by Alan's pleading, not to fear the consequences of an immediate decision. He paid the highest compliments

* Said of an adventurous gipsy, who resolves at all risks to convert a sheep's horn into a spoon.

to his very young brother—" the Benjamin, as he would presume to call him, of the learned Faculty—said the alleged hardships of Mr. Peebles were compensated, by his being placed in a situation where the benevolence of their Lordships had assigned him gratuitously such assistance as he might not otherwise have obtained at a high price—and allowed his young brother had put many things in such a new point of view, that, although he was quite certain of his ability to refute them, he was honestly desirous of having a few hours to arrange his answer, in order to be able to follow Mr. Fairford from point to point. He had further to observe, there was one point of the case to which his brother, whose attention had been otherwise so wonderfully comprehensive, had not given the consideration which he expected; it was founded on the interpretation of certain correspondence which had passed betwixt the parties, soon after the dissolution of the copartnery."

The Court having heard Mr. Tough, readily allowed him two days for preparing himself, hinting, at the same time, that he might find his task difficult, and affording the young counsel, with high encomiums upon the mode in which he had acquitted himself, the choice of speaking, either now or at next calling of the cause, upon the point which Plainstanes's lawyer had adverted to.

Alan modestly apologized for what in fact had been an omission very pardonable in so complicated a case, and professed himself instantly ready to go through that correspondence, and prove that it was in form and substance exactly applicable to the view of the case he

had submitted to their lordships. He applied to his father, who sat behind him, to hand him, from time to time, the letters, in the order in which he meant to read and comment upon them.

Old Counsellor Tough had probably formed an ingenious enough scheme to blunt the effect of the young lawyer's reasoning, by thus obliging him to follow up a process of reasoning, clear and complete in itself, by a hasty and extemporary appendix. If so, he seemed likely to be disappointed; for Alan was well prepared on this, as on other parts of the cause, and recommenced his pleading with a degree of animation which added force even to what he had formerly stated, and might perhaps have occasioned the old gentleman to regret his having again called him up; when his father, as he handed him the letters, put one into his hand which produced a singular effect on the pleader.

At the first glance, he saw that the paper had no reference to the affairs of Peter Peebles; but the first glance also shewed him, what even at that time, and in that presence, he could not help reading; and which, being read, seemed totally to disconcert his ideas. He stopped short in his harangue—gazed on the paper with a look of surprise and horror—uttered an exclamation, and flinging down the brief which he had in his hand, hurried out of court without returning a single word of answer to the various questions, "what was the matter?"—"Was he taken unwell?"—"Should not a chair be called?" etc. etc. etc.

The elder Mr. Fairford, who remained seated, and looking as senseless as if he had been made of stone, was at length recalled to himself by the anxious inquiries of the judges and the counsel after his son's health. He then rose with an air, in which was mingled the deep habitual reverence in which he held the Court, with some internal cause of agitation, and with difficulty mentioned something of a mistake—a piece of bad news—Alan, he hoped, would be well enough to-morrow. But unable to proceed farther, he clasped his hands together, exclaiming, "My son! my son!" and left the court hastily, as if in pursuit of him.

"What's the matter with the auld bitch next?"* said an acute metaphysical judge, though somewhat coarse in his manners, aside to his brethren. "This is a daft cause, Bladderskate—first it drives the poor man mad that aught it—then your nevoy goes daft with fright, and flies the pit—then this smart young hopeful is aff the hooks with too hard study, I fancy—and now auld Saunders Fairford is as lunatic as the best of them. What say ye till't, ye bitch?"

"Nothing, my lord," answered Bladderskate, much too formal to admire the levities in which his philosophical brother sometimes indulged—"I say nothing, but pray to Heaven to keep our own wits."

"Amen, amen," answered his learned brother; "for some of us have but few to spare."

The Court then arose, and the audience departed,

* Tradition ascribes this whimsical style of language to the ingenious and philosophical Lord Kaimes.

greatly wondering at the talent displayed by Alan Fairford at his first appearance in a case so difficult and so complicated, and assigning an hundred conjectural causes, each different from the others, for the singular interruption which had clouded his day of success. The worst of the whole was, that six agents, who had each come to the separate resolution of thrusting a retaining fee into Alan's hand as he left the court, shook their heads as they returned the money into their leathern pouches, and said, "that the lad was clever, but they would like to see more of him before they engaged him in the way of business—they did not like his lowping away like a flea in a blanket."

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

HAD our friend Alexander Fairford known the consequences of his son's abrupt retreat from the Court, which are mentioned in the end of the last chapter, it might have accomplished the prediction of the lively old judge, and driven him utterly distracted. As it was, he was miserable enough. His son had risen ten degrees higher in his estimation than ever, by his display of juridical talents, which seemed to assure him that the applause of the judges and professors of the law, which, in his estimation, was worth that of all

mankind besides, authorized to the fullest extent the advantageous estimate which even his parental partiality had been induced to form of Alan's powers. On the other hand, he felt that he was himself a little humbled, from a disguise which he had practised towards this son of his hopes and wishes.

The truth was, that on the morning of this eventful day, Mr. Alexander Fairford had received from his correspondent and friend, Provost Crosbie of Dumfries, a letter of the following tenor:—

"DEAR SIR,

"YOUR respected favour of 25th ultimo, per favour of Mr. Darsie Latimer, reached me in safety, and I shewed to the young gentleman such attentions as he was pleased to accept of. The object of my present writing is twofold. First, the counsel are of opinion that you should now begin to stir in the thirlage cause; and they think they will be able, from evidence *noviter repertum*, to enable you to amend your condescendence upon the use and wont of the burgh, touching the *grana invecta et illata*. So you will please consider yourself as authorized to speak to Mr. Pest, and lay before him the papers which you will receive by the coach. The council think that a fee of two guineas may be sufficient on this occasion, as Mr. Pest had three for drawing the original condescendence.

"I take the opportunity of adding, that there has been a great riot among the Solway fishermen, who have destroyed, in a masterful manner, the stake-nets

set up near the mouth of this river; and have besides attacked the house of Quaker Geddes, one of the principal partners of the Tide-net Fishing Company, and done a great deal of damage. Am sorry to add, young Mr. Latimer was in the fray, and has not since been heard of. Murder is spoke of, but that may be a word of course. As the young gentleman has behaved rather oddly while in these parts, as in declining to dine with me more than once, and going about the country with strolling fiddlers and such-like, I rather hope that his present absence is only occasioned by a frolic; but as his servant has been making inquiries of me respecting his master, I thought it best to acquaint you in course of post. I have only to add, that our sheriff has taken a precognition, and committed one or two of the rioters. If I can be useful in this matter, either by advertising for Mr. Latimer as missing, publishing a reward, or otherwise, I will obey your respected instructions, being your most obedient to command,

"WILLIAM CROSBIE."

When Mr. Fairford received this letter, and had read it to an end, his first idea was to communicate it to his son, that an express might be instantly despatched, or a King's messenger sent with proper authority to search after his late guest.

The habits of the fishers were rude, as he well knew, though not absolutely sanguinary or ferocious; and there had been instances of their transporting

persons who had interfered in their smuggling trade to the Isle of Man, and elsewhere, and keeping them under restraint for many weeks. On this account, Mr. Fairford was naturally led to feel anxiety concerning the fate of his late inmate; and, at a less interesting moment, would certainly have set out himself, or licensed his son to go in pursuit of his friend.

But, alas! he was both a father and an agent. In the one capacity, he looked on his son as dearer to him than all the world besides; in the other, the lawsuit which he conducted was to him like an infant to its nurse, and the case of Poor Peter Peebles against Plainstanes was, he saw, adjourned, perhaps *sine die*, should this document reach the hands of his son. The mutual and enthusiastical affection betwixt the young men was well known to him; and he concluded, that if the precarious state of Latimer were made known to Alan Fairford, it would render him not only unwilling, but totally unfit, to discharge the duty of the day, to which the old gentleman attached such ideas of importance.

On mature reflection, therefore, he resolved, though not without some feelings of compunction, to delay communicating to his son the disagreeable intelligence which he had received, until the business of the day should be ended. The delay, he persuaded himself, could be of little consequence to Darsie Latimer, whose folly, he dared to say, had led him into some scrape which would meet an appropriate punishment, in some accidental restraint, which would be thus prolonged for

only a few hours longer. Besides, he would have time to speak to the Sheriff of the county—perhaps to the King's Advocate—and set about the matter in a regular manner, or, as he termed it, as summing up the duties of a solicitor, to *age as accords.**

The scheme, as we have seen, was partially successful, and was only ultimately defeated, as he confessed to himself with shame, by his own very unbusiness-like mistake of shuffling the Provost's letter, in the hurry and anxiety of the morning, among some papers belonging to Peter Peebles's affairs, and then handing it to his son, without observing the blunder. He used to protest, even till the day of his death, that he never had been guilty of such an inaccuracy as giving a paper out of his hand without looking at the docketing, except on that unhappy occasion, when, of all others, he had such particular reason to regret his negligence.

Disturbed by these reflections, the old gentleman had, for the first time in his life, some disinclination, arising from shame and vexation, to face his own son; so that to protract for a little the meeting, which he feared would be a painful one, he went to wait upon the Sheriff-depute, who he found had set off for Dumfries, in great haste, to superintend in person the investigation which had been set on foot by his Substitute. This gentleman's clerk could say little on the subject of the riot, excepting that it had been serious, much

* A Scots law phrase of no very determinate import, meaning, generally, to do what is fitting.

damage done to property, and some personal violence offered to individuals; but, as far as he had yet heard, no lives lost on the spot.

Mr. Fairford was compelled to return home with this intelligence; and on inquiring at James Wilkinson where his son was, received for answer, that "Maister Alan was in his own room, and very busy."

"We must have our explanation over," said Saunders Fairford to himself. "Better a finger off, as aye wagging;" and going to the door of his son's apartment, he knocked at first gently—then more loudly—but received no answer. Somewhat alarmed at this silence, he opened the door of the chamber—it was empty—clothes lay mixed in confusion with the law-books and papers, as if the inmate had been engaged in hastily packing for a journey. As Mr. Fairford looked around in alarm, his eye was arrested by a sealed letter lying upon his son's writing table, and addressed to himself. It contained the following words:—

"My Dearest Father,

"You will not, I trust, be surprised, nor perhaps very much displeased, to learn that I am now on my way to Dumfries-shire, to learn, by my own personal investigation, the present state of my dear friend, and afford him such relief as may be in my power, and which, I trust, will be effectual. I do not presume to reflect upon you, dearest sir, for concealing from me information of so much consequence to my peace of mind and happiness; but I hope your having done so

will be, if not an excuse, at least some mitigation of my present offence, in taking a step of consequence without consulting your pleasure; and, I must further own, under circumstances which perhaps might lead to your disapprobation of my purpose. I can only say, in further apology, that if any thing unhappy, which Heaven forbid! shall have occurred to the person who, next to yourself, is dearest to me in this world, I shall have on my heart, as a subject of eternal regret, that being in a certain degree warned of his danger, and furnished with the means of obviating it, I did not instantly hasten to his assistance, but preferred giving my attention to the business of this unlucky morning. No view of personal distinction, nothing, indeed, short of your earnest and often expressed wishes, could have detained me in town till this day; and having made this sacrifice to filial duty, I trust you will hold me excused, if I now obey the calls of friendship and humanity. Do not be in the least anxious on my account; I shall know, I trust, how to conduct myself with due caution in any emergence which may occur, otherwise my legal studies for so many years have been to little purpose. I am fully provided with money, and also with arms, in case of need; but you may rely on my prudence in avoiding all occasions of using the latter, short of the last necessity. God Almighty bless you, my dearest father! and grant that you may forgive the first, and, I trust, the last act approaching towards premeditated disobedience, of which I either have now, or shall hereafter have, to accuse

myself. I remain, till death, your dutiful and affectionate son, "ALAN FAIRFORD."

"P.S.—I shall write with the utmost regularity, acquainting you with my motions, and requesting your advice. I trust my stay will be very short, and I think it possible that I may bring back Darsie along with me."

The paper dropped from the old man's hand when he was thus assured of the misfortune which he apprehended. His first idea was to get a post-chaise, and pursue the fugitive; but he recollected, that, upon the very rare occasions when Alan had shewn himself indocile to the *patria potestas*, his natural ease and gentleness of disposition seemed hardened into obstinacy, and that now, entitled, as arrived at the years of majority, and a member of the learned Faculty, to direct his own motions, there was great doubt, whether, in the event of his overtaking his son, he might be able to prevail upon him to return back. In such a risk of failure, he thought it wiser to desist from his purpose, especially as even his success in such a pursuit would give a ridiculous *eclat* to the whole affair, which could not be otherwise than prejudicial to his son's rising character.

Bitter, however, were Saunders Fairford's reflections, as, again picking up the fatal scroll, he threw himself into his son's leathern easy-chair, and bestowed upon it a disjointed commentary. "Bring back Darsie? little doubt of that—the bad shilling is sure enough to

come back again. I wish Darsie no worse ill than that he were carried where the silly fool, Alan, should never see him again. It was an ill hour that he darkened my doors in, for, ever since that, Alan has given up his ain old-fashioned mother-wit, for the t'other's capernoited maggots and nonsense.—Provided with money? you must have more than I know of, then, my friend, for I trow I kept you pretty short for your own good.—Can he have gotten more fees? or, does he think five guineas has neither beginning nor end?—Arms! What would he do with arms, or what would any man do with them that is not a regular soldier under government, or else a thief-taker? I have had enough of arms, I trow, although I carried them for King George and the government. But this is a worse strait than Falkirk-field yet.—God guide us, we are poor inconsistent creatures! To think the lad should have made so able an appearance, and then bolted off this gate, after a glaiket ne'er-do-weel, like a hound upon a false scent!—Las-a-day! it's a sore thing to see a stunkard cow kick down the pail when it's reaming fou.—But, after all, it's an ill bird that defiles it's ain nest. I must cover up the scandal as well as I can.—What's the matter now, James?"

"A message, sir," said James Wilkinson, "from my Lord President; and he hopes Mr. Alan is not seriously indisposed."

"From the Lord President? the Lord preserve us! —I'll send an answer this instant; bid the lad sit down, and ask him to drink, James.—Let me see,"

continued he, taking a sheet of gilt-paper, "how we are to draw our answers."

Ere his pen had touched the paper, James was in the room again.

"What now, James?"

"Lord Bladderskate's lad is come to ask how Mr. Alan is, as he left the Court——"

"Ay, ay, ay," answered Saunders, bitterly; "he has e'en made a moonlight flitting, like my lord's ain nevoy."

"Shall I say sae, sir?" said James, who, as an old soldier, was literal in all things touching the service.

"The devil! no, no!—Bid the lad sit down and taste our ale. I will write his lordship an answer."

Once more the gilt paper was resumed, and once more the door was opened by James.

"Lord —— sends his servitor to ask after Mr. Alan."

"Oh, the deevil take their civility!" said poor Saunders. "Set him down to drink too—I will write to his lordship."

"The lads will bide your pleasure, sir, as lang as I keep the bicker fou; but this ringing is like to wear out the bell, I think; there are they at it again."

He answered the fresh summons accordingly, and came back to inform Mr. Fairford, that the Dean of Faculty was below, inquiring for Mr. Alan.—"Will I set him down to drink, too?" said James.

"Will you be an idiot, sir?" said Mr. Fairford, "Shew Mr. Dean into the parlour."

In going slowly down stairs, step by step, the perplexed man of business had time enough to reflect, that if it be possible to put a fair gloss upon a true story, the verity always serves the purpose better than any substitute which ingenuity can devise. He therefore told his learned visiter, that although his son had been incommoded by the heat of the court, and the long train of hard study, by day and night, preceding his exertions, yet he had fortunately so far recovered, as to be in condition to obey upon the instant a sudden summons which had called him to the country, on a matter of life and death.

"It should be a serious matter indeed that takes my young friend away at this moment," said the good-natured Dean. "I wish he had stayed to finish his pleading, and put down old Tough. Without compliment, Mr. Fairford, it was as fine a first appearance as ever I heard. I should be sorry your son did not follow it up in a reply. Nothing like striking while the iron is hot."

Mr. Saunders Fairford made a bitter grimace as he acquiesced in an opinion which was indeed decidedly his own; but he thought it most prudent to reply, "that the affair which rendered his son Alan's presence in the country absolutely necessary, regarded the affairs of a young gentleman of great fortune, who was a particular friend of Alan's, and who never took any material step in his affairs, without consulting his counsel learned in the law."

"Well, well, Mr. Fairford, you know best," answered

the learned Dean; "if there be death or marriage in the case, a will or a wedding is to be preferred to all other business. I am happy Mr. Alan is so much recovered as to be able for travel, and wish you a very good morning."

Having thus taken his ground to the Dean of Faculty, Mr. Fairford hastily wrote cards in answer to the inquiry of the three judges, accounting for Alan's absence in the same manner. These, being properly sealed and addressed, he delivered to James, with directions to dismiss the parti-coloured gentry, who, in the meanwhile, had consumed a gallon of twopenny ale, while discussing points of law, and addressing each other by their masters' titles.*

The exertion which these matters demanded, and the interest which so many persons of legal distinction appeared to have taken in his son, greatly relieved the oppressed spirit of Saunders Fairford, who continued to talk mysteriously of the very important business which had interfered with his son's attendance during the brief remainder of the session. He endeavoured to lay the same unction to his own heart; but here the appli-

* The Scottish Judges are distinguished by the title of lord prefixed to their own temporal designation. As the ladies of these official dignitaries do not bear any share in their husbands' honours, they are distinguished only by their lords' family name. They were not always contented with this species of Salique law, which certainly is somewhat inconsistent. But their pretensions to title are said to have been long since repelled by James V., the sovereign who founded the College of Justice. "I," said he, "made the carles lords, but who the devil made the carlines ladies?"

cation was less fortunate, for his conscience told him, that no end, however important, which could be achieved in Darsie Latimer's affairs, could be balanced against the reputation which Alan was like to forfeit, by deserting the cause of Poor Peter Peebles.

In the meanwhile, although the haze which surrounded the cause, or causes, of that unfortunate litigant had been for a time dispelled by Alan's eloquence, like a fog by the thunder of artillery, yet it seemed once more to settle down upon the mass of litigation, thick as the palpable darkness of Egypt, at the very sound of Mr. Tough's voice, who, on the second day after Alan's departure, was heard in answer to the opening counsel. Deep-mouthed, long-breathed, and pertinacious, taking a pinch of snuff betwixt every sentence, which otherwise seemed interminable—the veteran pleader prosed over all the themes which had been treated so luminously by Fairford; he quietly and imperceptibly replaced all the rubbish which the other had cleared away; and succeeded in restoring the veil of obscurity and unintelligibility which had for many years darkened the case of Peebles against Plainstanes; and the matter was once more hung up by a remit to an accountant, with instruction to report before answer. So different a result from that which the public had been led to expect from Alan's speech, gave rise to various speculations.

The client himself opined, that it was entirely owing, first, to his own absence during the first day's pleading, being, as he said, deboshed with brandy, usquebaugh,

and other strong waters, at John's Coffee-house, *per ambages* of Peter Drudgeit, employed to that effect by and through the device, counsel and covyne of Saunders Fairford, his agent or pretended agent. Secondly, by the flight and voluntary desertion of the younger Fairford, the advocate; on account of which he served both father and son with a petition and complaint against them, for malversation in office. So that the apparent and most probable issue of this cause seemed to menace the melancholy Mr. Saunders Fairford with additional subject for plague and mortification; which was the more galling, as his conscience told him that the case was really given away, and that a very brief resumption of the former argument, with reference to the necessary authorities and points of evidence, would have enabled Alan, by the mere breath, as it were, of his mouth, to blow away the various cobwebs with which Mr. Tough had again invested the proceedings. But it went, he said, just like a decreet in absence and was lost for want of a contradictor.

In the meantime, nearly a week passed over without Mr. Fairford hearing a word directly from his son. He learned, indeed, by a letter from Mr. Crosbie, that the young counsellor had safely reached Dumfries, but had left that town upon some ulterior researches, the purpose of which he had not communicated. The old man, thus left to suspense, and to mortifying recollections, deprived also of the domestic society to which he had been habituated, began to suffer in body as well as in mind. He had formed the determination of setting

out in person for Dumfries-shire, when, after having been dogged, peevish, and snappish to his clerks and domestics, to an unusual and almost intolerable degree, the acrimonious humours settled in a hissing-hot fit of the gout, which is a well-known tamer of the most froward spirits, and under whose discipline we shall, for the present, leave him, as the continuation of this history assumes, with the next division, a form somewhat different from direct narrative and epistolary correspondence, though partaking of the character of both.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

JOURNAL OF DARSIE LATIMER.

[The following Address is written on the inside of the envelope which contained the Journal.]

INTO what hands soever these leaves may fall, they will instruct him, during a certain time at least, in the history of the life of an unfortunate young man, who, in the heart of a free country, and without any crime being laid to his charge, has been, and is, subjected to a course of unlawful and violent restraint. He who opens this letter, is therefore conjured to apply to the nearest magistrate, and following such indications as the papers may afford, to exert himself for the relief of one, who, while he possesses every claim to assistance which

oppressed innocence can give, has at the same time, both the inclination and the means of being grateful to his deliverers. Or, if the person obtaining these letters shall want courage or means to effect the writer's release, he is, in that case, conjured by every duty of a man to his fellow-mortals, and of a Christian towards one who professes the same holy faith, to take the speediest measures for conveying them with speed and safety to the hands of Alan Fairford, Esq., Advocate, residing in the family of his father, Alexander Fairford, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Brown's Square, Edinburgh. He may be assured of a liberal reward, besides the consciousness of having discharged a real duty to humanity.

My Dearest Alan,

Feeling as warmly towards you in doubt and in distress, as I ever did in the brightest days of our intimacy, it is to you whom I address a history which may perhaps fall into very different hands. A portion of my former spirit descends to my pen, when I write your name, and indulging the happy thought that you may be my deliverer from my present uncomfortable and alarming situation, as you have been my guide and counsellor on every former occasion, I will subdue the dejection which would otherwise overwhelm me. Therefore, as Heaven knows, I have time enough to write, I will endeavour to pour my thoughts out, as fully and freely as of old, though probably without the same gay and happy levity.

If the papers should reach other hands than yours, still I will not regret this exposure of my feelings; for, allowing for an ample share of the folly incidental to youth and inexperience, I fear not that I have much to be ashamed of in my narrative; nay, I even hope, that the open simplicity and frankness with which I am about to relate every singular and distressing circumstance, may prepossess even a stranger in my favour; and that, amid the multitude of seemingly trivial circumstances which I detail at length, a clew may be found to effect my liberation.

Another chance certainly remains—the Journal, as I may call it, may never reach the hands, either of the dear friend to whom it is addressed, or those of an indifferent stranger, but may become the prey of the persons by whom I am at present treated as a prisoner. Let it be so—they will learn from it little but what they already know; that, as a man, and an Englishman, my soul revolts at the usage which I have received; that I am determined to essay every possible means to obtain my freedom; that captivity has not broken my spirit, and that, although they may doubtless complete their oppression by murder, I am still willing to bequeath my cause to the justice of my country. Undeterred, therefore, by the probability that my papers may be torn from me, and subjected to the inspection of one in particular, who, causelessly my enemy already, may be yet farther incensed at me for recording the history of my wrongs, I proceed to resume the history of events which have befallen me since the conclusion

of my last letter to my dear Alan Fairford, dated, if I mistake not, on the 5th day of this still current month of August.

Upon the night preceding the date of that letter, I had been present, for the purpose of an idle frolic, at a dancing party at the village of Brokenburn, about six miles from Dumfries; many persons must have seen me there, should the fact appear of importance sufficient to require investigation. I danced, played on the violin, and took part in the festivity till about midnight, when my servant, Samuel Owen, brought me my horses, and I rode back to a small inn called Shepherd's Bush, kept by Mrs. Gregson, which had been occasionally my residence for about a fortnight past. I spent the earlier part of the forenoon in writing a letter which I have already mentioned, to you, my dear Alan, and which, I think, you must have received in safety. Why did I not follow your advice, so often given me? Why did I linger in the neighbourhood of a danger, of which a kind voice had warned me? These are now unavailing questions; I was blinded by a fatality, and remained fluttering like a moth around the candle, until I have been scorched to some purpose.

The greater part of the day had passed, and time hung heavy on my hands. I ought, perhaps, to blush at recollecting what has been often objected to me by the dear friend to whom this letter is addressed, viz. the facility with which I have, in moments of indolence, suffered my motions to be directed by any person who chanced to be near me, instead of taking the

labour of thinking or deciding for myself. I had employed for some time, as a sort of guide and errand-boy, a lad named Benjamin, the son of one widow Coltherd, who lives near the Shepherd's Bush, and I cannot but remember that, upon several occasions, I had of late suffered him to possess more influence over my motions, than at all became the difference of our age and condition. At present, he exerted himself to persuade me that it was the finest possible sport to see the fish taken out from the nets placed in the Solway at the reflux of the tide, and urged my going thither this evening so much, that, looking back on the whole circumstances, I cannot but think he had some especial motive for his conduct. These particulars I have mentioned, that if these papers fall into friendly hands, the boy may be sought after and submitted to examination.

His eloquence being unable to persuade me that I should take any pleasure in seeing the fruitless struggles of the fish when left in the nets and deserted by the tide, he artfully suggested, that Mr. and Miss Geddes, a respectable Quaker family well known in the neighbourhood, and with whom I had contracted habits of intimacy, would possibly be offended if I did not make them an early visit. Both, he said, had been particularly inquiring the reasons of my leaving their house rather suddenly on the previous day. I resolved, therefore, to walk up to Mount Sharon and make my apologies; and I agreed to permit the boy to attend upon me, and wait my return from the house, that I might fish on my way homeward to Shepherd's Bush,

for which amusement, he assured me, I would find the evening most favourable. I mention this minute circumstance, because I strongly suspect that this boy had a presentiment how the evening was to terminate with me, and entertained the selfish though childish wish of securing to himself an angling-rod which he had often admired, as a part of my spoils. I may do the boy wrong, but I had before remarked in him the peculiar art of pursuing the trifling objects of cupidity proper to his age, with the systematic address of much riper years.

When we had commenced our walk, I upbraided him with the coolness of the evening, considering the season, the easterly wind and other circumstances, unfavourable for angling. He persisted in his own story, and made a few casts, as if to convince me of my error, but caught no fish; and, indeed, as I am now convinced, was much more intent on watching my motions, than on taking any. When I ridiculed him once more on his fruitless endeavours he answered with a sneering smile, that "the trouts would not rise, because there was thunder in the air;" an intimation which, in one sense, I have found too true.

I arrived at Mount Sharon; was received by my friends there with their wonted kindness; and after being a little rallied on my having suddenly left them on the preceding evening, I agreed to make atonement by staying all night, and dismissed the lad who attended with my fishing-rod, to carry that information to Shepherd's Bush. It may be doubted whether he went thither, or in a different direction.

Betwixt eight and nine o'clock, when it began to become dark, we walked on the terrace to enjoy the appearance of the firmament, glittering with ten million of stars; to which a slight touch of early frost gave tenfold lustre. As we gazed on this splendid scene, Miss Geddes, I think, was the first to point out to our admiration a shooting or falling star, which, she said, drew a long train after it. Looking to the part of the heavens which she pointed out, I distinctly observed two successive sky-rockets arise and burst in the sky.

"These meteors," said Mr. Geddes, in answer to his sister's observation, "are not formed in heaven, nor do they bode any good to the dwellers upon earth."

As he spoke, I looked to another quarter of the sky, and a rocket, as if a signal in answer to those which had already appeared, rose high from the earth, and burst apparently among the stars.

Mr. Geddes seemed very thoughtful for some minutes, and then said to his sister, "Rachel, though it waxes late, I must go down to the fishing station, and pass the night in the overseer's room there."

"Nay, then," replied the lady, "I am but too well assured that the sons of Belial are menacing these nets and devices. Joshua, art thou a man of peace, and wilt thou willingly and wittingly thrust thyself, where thou mayest be tempted by the old man Adam within thee, to enter into debate and strife?"

"I am a man of peace, Rachel," answered Mr. Geddes, "even to the utmost extent which our friends can demand of humanity; and neither have I ever used,

nor, with the help of God, will I at any future time employ, the arm of flesh to repel or to revenge injuries. But if I can, by mild reasons and firm conduct, save those rude men from committing a crime, and the property belonging to myself and others from sustaining damage, surely I do but the duty of a man and a Christian."

With these words, he ordered his horse instantly; and his sister ceasing to argue with him, folded her arms upon her bosom, and looked up to heaven with a resigned and yet sorrowful countenance.

These particulars may appear trivial; but it is better, in my present condition, to exert my faculties in recollecting the past, and in recording it, than waste them in vain and anxious anticipations of the future.

It would have been scarcely proper in me to remain in the house, from which the master was thus suddenly summoned away; and I therefore begged permission to attend him to the fishing station, assuring his sister that I would be a guarantee for his safety.

The proposal seemed to give much pleasure to Miss Geddes. "Let it be so, brother," she said; "and let the young man have the desire of his heart, that there may be a faithful witness to stand by thee in the hour of need, and to report how it shall fare with thee."

"Nay, Rachel," said the worthy man, "thou art to blame in this, that to quiet thy apprehensions on my account, thou shouldst thrust into danger—if danger it shall prove to be—this youth, our guest; for whom,

doubtless, in case of mishap, as many hearts will ache as may be afflicted on our account."

"No, my good friend," said I, taking Mr. Geddes's hand, "I am not so happy as you suppose me. Were my span to be concluded this evening, few would so much as know that such a being had existed for twenty years on the face of the earth; and of these few, only one would sincerely regret me. Do not, therefore, refuse me the privilege of attending you; and of shewing, by so trifling an act of kindness, that if I have few friends, I am at least desirous to serve them."

"Thou hast a kind heart, I warrant thee," said Joshua Geddes, returning the pressure of my hand. "Rachel, the young man shall go with me. Why should he not face danger, in order to do justice and preserve peace? There is that within me," he added, looking upwards, and with a passing enthusiasm which I had not before observed, and the absence of which perhaps rather belonged to the sect than to his own personal character —"I say, I have that within which assures me, that though the ungodly may rage even like the storm of the ocean, they shall not have freedom to prevail against us."

Having spoken thus, Mr. Geddes appointed a pony to be saddled for my use; and having taken a basket with some provisions, and a servant to carry back the horses, for which there was no accommodation at the fishing station, we set off about nine o'clock at night, and after three quarters of an hour's riding, arrived at our place of destination.

The station consists, or then consisted, of huts for

four or five fishermen, a cooperage and shed, and a better sort of cottage, at which the superintendent resided. We gave our horses to the servant to be carried back to Mount Sharon; my companion expressing himself humanely anxious for their safety—and knocked at the door of the house. At first we only heard a barking of dogs, but these animals became quiet on snuffing beneath the door and acknowledging the presence of friends. A hoarse voice then demanded, in rather unfriendly accents, who we were, and what we wanted; and it was not until Joshua named himself, and called upon his superintendent to open, that the latter appeared at the door of the hut, attended by three large dogs of the Newfoundland breed. He had a flambeau in his hand, and two large heavy ship-pistols stuck into his belt. He was a stout, elderly man, who had been a sailor, as I learned, during the earlier part of his life, and was now much confided in by the Fishing Company, whose concerns he directed under the orders of Mr. Geddes.

"Thou didst not expect me to-night, friend Davies?" said my friend to the old man, who was arranging seats for us by the fire.

"No, Master Geddes," answered he, "I did not expect you, nor, to speak the truth, did I wish for you either."

"These are plain terms, John Davies," answered Mr. Geddes.

"Ay, ay, sir, I know your worship loves no holiday speeches."

"Thou dost guess, I suppose, what brings us here so late, John Davies?" said Mr. Geddes.

"I do suppose, sir," answered the superintendent, "that it was because these d—d smuggling wreckers on the coast are shewing their lights to gather their forces, as they did the night before they broke down the dam-dike and wears up the country; but if that same be the case, I wish once more you had staid away, for your worship carries no fighting tackle aboard, I think; and there will be work for such ere morning, your worship."

"Worship is due to Heaven only, John Davies," said Geddes, "I have often desired thee to desist from using that phrase to me."

"I wont, then," said John; "no offence meant: But how the devil can a man stand picking his words, when he is just going to come to blows?"

"I hope not, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes. "Call in the rest of the men, that I may give them their instructions."

"I may cry till doomsday, Master Geddes, ere a soul answers—the cowardly lubbers have all made sail—the cooper, and all the rest of them, so soon as they heard the enemy were at sea. They have all taken to the long-boat, and left the ship among the breakers, except little Phil and myself—they have, by ——!"

"Swear not at all, John Davies—thou art an honest man; and I believe, without an oath, that thy comrades love their own bones better than my goods and chattels.

And so thou hast no assistance but little Phil against a hundred men or two?"

"Why, there are the dogs, your honour knows, Neptune and Thetis—and the puppy may do something; and then though your worship—I beg pardon—though your honour be no great fighter, this young gentleman may bear a hand."

"Ay, and I see you are provided with arms," said Mr. Geddes; "let me see them."

"Ay, ay, sir; here be a pair of buffers will bite as well as bark—these will make sure of two rogues at least. It would be a shame to strike without firing a shot.—Take care, your honour, they are double-shotted."

"Ay, John Davies, I will take care of them," throwing the pistols into a tub of water beside him; "and I wish I could render the whole generation of them useless at the same moment."

A deep shade of displeasure passed over John Davies's weatherbeaten countenance. "Belike your honour is going to take the command yourself, then?" he said, after a pause. "Why, I can be of little use now; and since your worship, or your honour, or whatever you are, means to strike quietly, I believe you will do it better without me than with me, for I am like enough to make mischief, I admit; but I'll never leave my post without orders."

"Then you have mine, John Davies, to go to Mount Sharon directly, and take the boy Phil with you. Where is he?"

"He is on the outlook for these scums of the

earth," answered Davies; "but it is to no purpose to know when they come, if we are not to stand to our weapons."

"We will use none but those of sense and reason, John."

"And you may just as well cast chaff against the wind, as speak sense and reason to the like of them."

"Well, well, be it so," said Joshua; "and now, John Davies, I know thou art what the world calls a brave fellow, and I have ever found thee an honest one. And now I command you to go to Mount Sharon, and let Phil lie on the bank-side—see the poor boy hath a sea-cloak, though—and watch what happens there, and let him bring you the news; and if any violence shall be offered to the property there, I trust to your fidelity to carry my sister to Dumfries, to the house of our friends the Corsacks, and inform the civil authorities of what mischief hath befallen."

The old seaman paused a moment. "It is hard lines for me," he said, "to leave your honour in tribulation; and yet, staying here, I am only like to make bad worse; and your honour's sister, Miss Rachel, must be looked to, that's certain; for if the rogues once get their hand to mischief, they will come to Mount Sharon after they have wasted and destroyed this here snug little roadstead, where I thought to ride at anchor for life."

"Right, right, John Davies," said Joshua Geddes; "and best call the dogs with you."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the veteran, "for they are some-

thing of my mind, and would not keep quiet if they saw mischief doing; so maybe they might come to mischief, poor dumb creatures. So God bless your honour—I mean your worship—I cannot bring my mouth to say fare you well.—Here, Neptune, Thetis! come, dogs, come."

So saying, and with a very crest-fallen countenance, John Davies left the hut.

"Now there goes one of the best and most faithful creatures that ever was born," said Mr. Geddes, as the superintendent shut the door of the cottage. "Nature made him with a heart that would not have suffered him to harm a fly; but thou seest, friend Latimer, that as men arm their bull-dogs with spiked collars, and their game cocks with steel spurs, to aid them in fight, so they corrupt, by education, the best and mildest natures, until fortitude and spirit become stubbornness and ferocity. Believe me, friend Latimer, I would as soon expose my faithful household dog to a vain combat with a herd of wolves, as yon trusty creature to the violence of the enraged multitude. But I need say little on this subject to thee, friend Latimer, who, I doubt not, art trained to believe that courage is displayed and honour attained, not by doing and suffering, as becomes a man, that which fate calls u to suffer, and justice commands us to do, but because thou art ready to retort violence for violence, and con siderest the lightest insult as a sufficient cause for the spilling of blood, nay, the taking of life.—But, leaving these points of controversy to a more fit season, let us

see what our basket of provision contains; for in truth, friend Latimer, I am one of those whom neither fear nor anxiety deprives of their ordinary appetite."

We found the means of good cheer accordingly, which Mr. Geddes seemed to enjoy as much as if it had been eaten in a situation of perfect safety; nay, his conversation appeared to be rather more gay than on ordinary occasions. After eating our supper we left the hut together, and walked for a few minutes on the banks of the sea. It was high water, and the ebb had not yet commenced. The moon shone broad and bright upon the placid face of the Solway Firth, and shewed a slight ripple upon the stakes, the tops of which were just visible above the waves, and on the dark-coloured buoys which marked the upper edge of the enclosure of nets. At a much greater distance,—for the estuary is here very wide,—the line of the English coast was seen on the verge of the water, resembling one of those fog-banks on which mariners are said to gaze, uncertain whether it be land or atmospherical delusion.

"We shall be undisturbed for some hours," said Mr. Geddes; "they will not come down upon us till the state of the tide permits them to destroy the tide-nets. Is it not strange to think that human passions will so soon transform such a tranquil scene as this, into one of devastation and confusion?"

It was indeed a scene of exquisite stillness; so much so, that the restless waves of the Solway seemed, if not absolutely to sleep, at least to slumber;—on the shore no night-bird was heard—the cock had not sung his

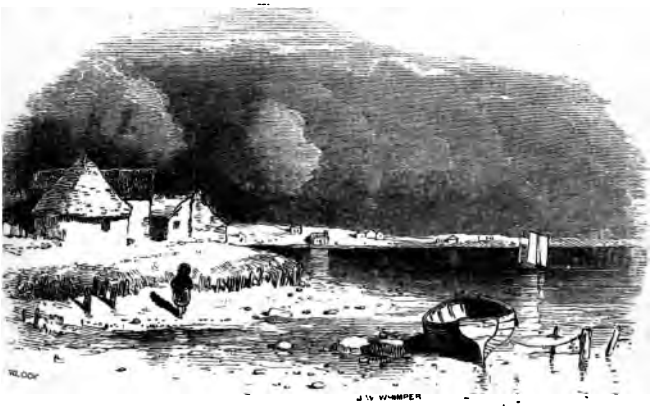
first matins, and we ourselves walked more lightly than by day, as if to suit the sounds of our own paces to the serene tranquillity around us. At length, the plaintive cry of a dog broke the silence, and on our return to the cottage, we found that the younger of the three animals which had gone along with John Davies, unaccustomed, perhaps, to distant journeys, and the duty of following to heel, had strayed from the party, and, unable to rejoin them, had wandered back to the place of its birth.

"Another feeble addition to our feeble garrison," said Mr. Geddes, as he caressed the dog, and admitted it into the cottage. "Poor thing! as thou art incapable of doing any mischief, I hope thou wilt sustain none. At least thou mayest do us the good service of a sentinel, and permit us to enjoy a quiet repose, under the certainty that thou wilt alarm us when the enemy is at hand."

There were two beds in the superintendent's room, upon which we threw ourselves. Mr. Geddes, with his happy equanimity of temper, was asleep in the first five minutes. I lay for some time in doubtful and anxious thoughts, watching the fire and the motions of the restless dog, which, disturbed probably at the absence of John Davies, wandered from the hearth to the door and back again, then came to the bedside and licked my hands and face, and at length, experiencing no repulse to its advances, established itself at my feet, and went to sleep, an example which I soon afterwards followed.

The rage of narration, my dear Alan—for I will never relinquish the hope that what I am writing may

one day reach your hands—has not forsaken me, even in my confinement, and the extensive though unimportant details into which I have been hurried, renders it necessary that I commence another sheet. Fortunately, my pigmy characters comprehend a great many words within a small space of paper.



CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

DARSIE LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THE morning was dawning, and Mr. Geddes and I myself were still sleeping soundly, when the alarm was given by my canine bedfellow, who first growled deeply at intervals, and at length bore more decided testimony to the approach of some enemy. I opened the door of the cottage, and perceived, at the distance of about two hundred yards, a small but close column of men, which I would have taken for a dark hedge, but that I could perceive it was advancing rapidly and in silence.

The dog flew towards them, but instantly ran howling back to me, having probably been chastised by a stick or a stone. Uncertain as to the plan of tactics

or of treaty which Mr. Geddes might think proper to adopt, I was about to retire into the cottage, when he suddenly joined me at the door, and slipping his arm through mine, said, "Let us go to meet them manfully; we have done nothing to be ashamed of.—Friends," he said, raising his voice as we approached them, "who and what are you, and with what purpose are you here on my property?"

A loud cheer was the answer returned, and a brace of fiddlers who occupied the front of the march immediately struck up the insulting air, the words of which begin,

"Merrily danced the Quaker's wife,
And merrily danced the Quaker."

Even at that moment of alarm, I think I recognized the tones of the blind fiddler, Will, known by the name of Wandering Willie, from his itinerant habits. They continued to advance swiftly and in great order, in their front

"The fiery fiddlers playing martial airs;"

when, coming close up, they surrounded us by a single movement, and there was a universal cry, "Whoop, Quaker—whoop, Quaker! Here have we them both, the wet Quaker and the dry one."

"Hang up the wet Quaker to dry, and wet the dry one with a ducking," answered another voice.

"Where is the sea-otter, John Davies, that destroyed more fish than any sealch upon Ailsay Craig?" exclaimed a third voice. "I have an old crow to pluck with him, and a pock to put the feathers in."

We stood perfectly passive; for, to have attempted resistance against more than a hundred men, armed with guns, fish-spears, iron-crows, spades, and bludgeons, would have been an act of utter insanity. Mr. Geddes, with his strong sonorous voice, answered the question about the superintendent in a manner, the manly indifference of which compelled them to attend to him.

"John Davies," he said, "will, I trust, soon be at Dumfries ——"

"To fetch down redcoats and dragoons against us, you canting old villain!"

A blow was, at the same time, levelled at my friend, which I parried by interposing the stick I had in my hand. I was instantly struck down, and have a faint recollection of hearing some crying, "Kill the young spy!" and others, as I thought, interposing on my behalf. But a second blow on the head, received in the scuffle, soon deprived me of sense and consciousness, and threw me into a state of insensibility, from which I did not recover immediately. When I did come to myself, I was lying on the bed from which I had just risen before the fray, and my poor companion, the Newfoundland puppy, its courage entirely cowed by the tumult of the riot, had crept as close to me as it could, and lay trembling and whining, as if under the most dreadful terror. I doubted at first whether I had not dreamed of the tumult, until, as I attempted to rise, a feeling of pain and dizziness assured me that the injury I had sustained was but too real. I gathered

together my senses—listened—and heard at a distance the shouts of the rioters, busy, doubtless, in their work of devastation. I made a second effort to rise, or at least to turn myself, for I lay with my face to the wall of the cottage, but I found that my limbs were secured, and my motions effectually prevented—not indeed by cords, but by linen or cloth bandages swathed around my ankles, and securing my arms to my sides. Aware of my utterly captive condition, I groaned betwixt bodily pain and mental distress.

A voice by my bedside whispered, in a whining tone, "Whisht a-ye, hinnie—whisht a-ye; haud your tongue, like a gude bairn—ye have cost us dear aneugh already. My hinnie's clean gane now."

Knowing, as I thought, the phraseology of the wife of the itinerant musician, I asked her where her husband was, and whether he had been hurt.

"Broken," answered the dame, "all broken to pieces; fit for nought but to be made spunks of—the best blood that was in Scotland."

"Broken?—blood?—is your husband wounded; has there been bloodshed—broken limbs?"

"Broken limbs!—I wish," answered the beldam, "that my hinnie had broken the best bane in his body, before he had broken his fiddle, that was the best blood in Scotland—it was a cremony, for aught that I ken."

"Pshaw—only his fiddle?" said I.

"I dinna ken what waur your honour could have wished him to do, unless he had broken his neck; and this is muckle the same to my hinnie, Willie, and me.

Chaw, indeed! It is easy to say *chaw*, but wha is to gie us onything to chaw?—the bread-winner's gane, and we may e'en sit down and starve."

"No, no," I said, "I will pay you for twenty such fiddles."

"Twenty such! is that a' ye ken about it? the country hadna the like o't. But if your honour were to pay us, as nae doubt wad be to your credit here and hereafter, where are ye to get the siller?"

"I have enough of money," said I, attempting to reach my hand towards my side-pocket; "unloose these bandages, and I will pay you on the spot."

This hint appeared to move her, and she was approaching the bedside, as I hoped, to liberate me from my bonds, when a nearer and more desperate shout was heard, as if the rioters were close by the hut.

"I daurna—I daurna," said the poor woman, "they would murder me and my hinnie Willie baith, and they have misguided us aneugh already;—but if there is any thing worldly I could do for your honour, leave out loosing ye?"

What she said, recalled me to my bodily suffering. Agitation, and the effects of the usage I had received, had produced a burning thirst. I asked for a drink of water.

"Heaven Almighty forbid that Epps Ainslie should gie ony sick gentleman cauld well-water, and him in a fever. Na, na, hinnie, let me alane. I'll do better for ye than the like o' that."

"Give me what you will," I replied; "let it but be liquid and cool."

The woman gave me a large horn accordingly, filled with spirits and water, which, without minute inquiry concerning the nature of its contents, I drained at a draught. Either the spirits taken in such a manner, acted more suddenly than usual on my brain, or else there was some drug mixed with the beverage. I remember little after drinking it off, only that the appearance of things around me became indistinct; that the woman's form seemed to multiply itself, and to flit in various figures around me, bearing the same lineaments as she herself did. I remember also that the discordant noises and cries of those without the cottage seemed to die away in a hum like that with which a nurse hushes her babe. At length I fell into a deep sound sleep, or rather, a state of absolute insensibility.

I have reason to think this species of trance lasted for many hours; indeed, for the whole subsequent day and part of the night. It was not uniformly so profound, for my recollection of it is chequered with many dreams, all of a painful nature, but too faint and too indistinct to be remembered. At length the moment of waking came, and my sensations were horrible.

A deep sound, which, in the confusion of my senses, I identified with the cries of the rioters, was the first thing of which I was sensible; next, I became conscious that I was carried violently forward in some conveyance, with an unequal motion, which gave me much pain. My position was horizontal, and when I attempted to

stretch my hands in order to find some mode of securing myself against this species of suffering, I found I was bound as before, and the horrible reality rushed on my mind, that I was in the hands of those who had lately committed a great outrage on property, and were now about to kidnap, if not to murder me. I opened my eyes, it was to no purpose—all around me was dark, for a day had passed over during my captivity. A dispiriting sickness oppressed my head—my heart seemed on fire, while my feet and hands were chilled and benumbed with want of circulation. It was with the utmost difficulty, that I at length, and gradually, recovered in a sufficient degree the power of observing external sounds and circumstances; and when I did so, they presented nothing consolatory.

Groping with my hands, as far as the bandages would permit, and receiving the assistance of some occasional glances of the moonlight, I became aware that the carriage in which I was transported was one of the light carts of the country, called *tumblers*, and that a little attention had been paid to my accommodation, as I was laid upon some sacks covered with matting, and filled with straw. Without these, my condition would have been still more intolerable, for the vehicle, sinking now on one side, and now on the other, sometimes sticking absolutely fast, and requiring the utmost exertions of the animal which drew it to put it once more in motion, was subjected to jolts in all directions, which were very severe. At other times it rolled silently and smoothly over what seemed to be wet sand;

and, as I heard the distant roar of the tide, I had little doubt that we were engaged in passing the formidable estuary which divides the two kingdoms.

There seemed to be at least five or six people about the cart, some on foot, others on horseback; the former lent assistance whenever it was in danger of upsetting, or sticking fast in the quicksand; the others rode before and acted as guides, often changing the direction of the vehicle as the precarious state of the passage required.

I addressed myself to the men around the cart, and endeavoured to move their compassion. I had harmed, I said, no one, and for no action in my life had deserved such cruel treatment. I had no concern whatever in the fishing station which had incurred their displeasure, and my acquaintance with Mr. Geddes was of a very late date. Lastly, and as my strongest argument, I endeavoured to excite their fears, by informing them that my rank in life would not permit me to be either murdered or secreted with impunity; and to interest their avarice, by the promises I made them of reward, if they would effect my deliverance. I only received a scornful laugh in reply to my threats; my promises might have done more, for the fellows were whispering together as if in hesitation, and I began to reiterate and increase my offers, when the voice of one of the horsemen, who had suddenly come up, enjoined silence to the men on foot, and, approaching the side of the cart, said to me, with a strong and determined voice, "Young man, there is no personal harm designed to you. If you remain silent and quiet, you may reckon

on good treatment; but if you endeavour to tamper with these men in the execution of their duty, I will take such measures for silencing you, as you shall remember the longest day you have to live."

I thought I knew the voice which uttered these threats; but, in such a situation, my perceptions could not be supposed to be perfectly accurate. I was contented to reply, "Whoever you are that speak to me, I entreat the benefit of the meanest prisoner, who is not to be subjected legally to greater hardship than is necessary for the restraint of his person. I entreat that these bonds, which hurt me so cruelly, may be slackened at least, if not removed altogether."

"I will slacken the belts," said the former speaker; "nay, I will altogether remove them, and allow you to pursue your journey in a more convenient manner, provided you will give me your word of honour that you will not attempt an escape."

"*Never!*" I answered, with an energy of which despair alone could have rendered me capable—"I will *never* submit to loss of freedom a moment longer than I am subjected to it by force."

"Enough," he replied; "the sentiment is natural; but do not on your side complain that I, who am carrying on an important undertaking, use the only means in my power for ensuring its success."

I entreated to know what it was designed to do with me; but my conductor, in a voice of menacing authority, desired me to be silent on my peril; and my strength and spirits were too much exhausted to permit my

continuing a dialogue so singular, even if I could have promised myself any good result by doing so.

It is proper here to add, that, from my recollections at the time, and from what has since taken place, I have the strongest possible belief that the man with whom I held this expostulation, was the singular person residing at Brokenburn, in Dumfries-shire, and called by the fishers of that hamlet, the Laird of the Solway Lochs. The cause for his inveterate persecution I cannot pretend even to guess at.

In the meantime, the cart was dragged heavily and wearily on, until the nearer roar of the advancing tide excited the apprehension of another danger. I could not mistake the sound, which I had heard upon another occasion, when it was only the speed of a fleet horse which saved me from perishing in the quicksands. Thou, my dear Alan, canst not but remember the former circumstances; and now, wonderful contrast! the very man, to the best of my belief, who then saved me from peril, was the leader of the lawless band who had deprived me of my liberty. I conjectured that the danger grew imminent; for I heard some words and circumstances which made me aware that a rider hastily fastened his own horse to the shafts of the cart, in order to assist the exhausted animal which drew it, and the vehicle was now pulled forward at a faster pace, which the horses were urged to maintain by blows and curses. The men, however, were inhabitants of the neighbourhood; and I had strong personal reason to believe, that one of them, at least, was intimately

acquainted with all the depths and shallows of the perilous paths in which we were engaged. But they were in imminent danger themselves; and if so, as from the whispering and exertions to push on with the cart, was much to be apprehended, there was little doubt that I should be left behind as a useless encumbrance, and that while I was in a condition which rendered every chance of escape impracticable. These were awful apprehensions; but it pleased Providence to increase them to a point which my brain was scarcely able to endure.

As we approached very near to a black line, which, dimly visible as it was, I could make out to be the shore, we heard two or three sounds, which appeared to be the report of fire-arms. Immediately all was bustle among our party to get forward. Presently a fellow galloped up to us, crying out, "Ware hawk! ware hawk! the land-sharks are out from Burgh, and Allonby Tom will lose his cargo if you do not bear a hand."

Most of my company seemed to make hastily for the shore on receiving this intelligence. A driver was left with the cart ; but at length, when, after repeated and hair-breadth escapes, it actually stuck fast in a slough or quicksand, the fellow with an oath, cut the harness, and, as I presume, departed with the horses, whose feet I heard splashing over the wet sand, and through the shallows, as he galloped off.

The dropping sound of fire-arms was still continued, but lost almost entirely in the thunder of the advanc-

ing surge. By a desperate effort I raised myself in the cart, and attained a sitting posture, which served only to shew me the extent of my danger. There lay my native land—my own England—the land where I was born, and to which my wishes, since my earliest age, had turned with all the prejudices of national feeling—there it lay, within a furlong of the place where I yet was; that furlong which an infant would have raced over in a minute, was yet a barrier effectual to divide me for ever from England and from life. I soon not only heard the roar of this dreadful torrent, but saw by the fitful moonlight, the foamy crests of the devouring waves, as they advanced with the speed and fury of a pack of hungry wolves.

The consciousness that the slightest ray of hope, or power of struggling, was not left me, quite overcame the constancy which I had hitherto maintained. My eyes began to swim—my head grew giddy and mad with fear —I chattered and howled to the howling and roaring sea. One or two great waves already reached the cart, when the conductor of the party whom I have mentioned so often, was, as if by magic, at my side. He sprang from his horse into the vehicle, cut the ligatures which restrained me, and bade me get up and mount in the fiend's name.

Seeing I was incapable of obeying, he seized me, as if I had been a child of six months old, threw me across the horse, sprung on behind, supporting with one hand, while he directed the animal with the other. In my helpless and painful posture, I was unconscious of the

degree of danger which we incurred; but I believe at one time the horse was swimming, or nearly so; and that it was with difficulty that my stern and powerful assistant kept my head above water. I remember particularly the shock which I felt when the animal, endeavouring to gain the bank, reared, and very nearly fell back on his burden. The time during which I continued in this dreadful condition did not probably exceed two or three minutes, yet so strongly were they marked with horror and agony, that they seem to my recollection a much more considerable space of time.

When I had been thus snatched from destruction, I had only power to say to my protector—or oppressor—for he merited either name at my hand, "You do not, then, design to murder me?"

He laughed as he replied, but it was a sort of laughter which I scarce desire to hear again,—"Else you think I had let the waves do the work? But remember the shepherd saves his sheep from the torrent—is it to preserve its life?—Be silent, however, with questions or entreaties. What I mean to do, thou canst no more discover or prevent, than a man, with his bare palm, can scoop dry the Solway."

I was too much exhausted to continue the argument; and, still numbed and torpid in all my limbs, permitted myself without reluctance to be placed on a horse brought for the purpose. My formidable conductor rode on the one side, and another person on the other, keeping me upright in the saddle. In this manner we travelled forward at a considerable rate, and by by-roads,

with which my attendant seemed as familiar as with the perilous passages of the Solway.

At length, after stumbling through a labyrinth of dark and deep lanes, and crossing more than one rough and barren heath, we found ourselves on the edge of a high-road, where a chaise and four awaited, as it appeared, our arrival. To my great relief, we now changed our mode of conveyance; for my dizziness and headache had returned in so strong a degree, that I should otherwise have been totally unable to keep my seat on horseback, even with the support which I received.

My doubted and dangerous companion signed to me to enter the carriage—the man who had ridden on the left side of my horse stepped in after me, and drawing up the blinds of the vehicle, gave the signal for instant departure.

I had obtained a glimpse of the countenance of my new companion, as by the aid of a dark lantern the drivers opened the carriage door, and I was well-nigh persuaded that I recognized in him the domestic of the leader of this party, whom I had seen at his house in Brokenburn on a former occasion. To ascertain the truth of my suspicion, I asked him whether his name was not Cristal Nixon.

"What is other folk's names to you," he replied, gruffly, "who cannot tell your own father and mother?"

"You know them, perhaps?" I exclaimed eagerly. "You know them! and with that secret is connected the treatment which I am now receiving? It must be so, for in my life have I never injured any one. Tell

me the cause of my misfortunes, or rather, help me to my liberty, and I will reward you richly."

"Ay, ay," replied my keeper; "but what use to give you liberty, who know nothing how to use it like a gentleman, but spend your time with Quakers and fiddlers, and such like raff? If I was your—hem, hem, hem!"

Here Cristal stopped short, just on the point, as it appeared, when some information was likely to escape him. I urged him once more to be my friend, and promised him all the stock of money which I had about me, and it was not inconsiderable, if he would assist in my escape.

He listened, as if to a proposition which had some interest, and replied, but in a voice rather softer than before, "Ay, but men do not catch old birds with chaff, my master. Where have you got the rhino you are so flush of?"

"I will give you earnest directly, and that in bank-notes," said I; but thrusting my hand into my side-pocket, I found my pocketbook was gone. I would have persuaded myself that it was only the numbness of my hands which prevented my finding it; but Cristal Nixon, who bears in his countenance that cynicism which is especially entertained with human misery, no longer suppressed his laughter.

"Oh, ho! my young master," he said; "we have taken good enough care you have not kept the means of bribing poor folk's fidelity. What, man, they have souls as well as other people, and to make them break

trust is a deadly sin. And as for me, young gentleman, if you would fill Saint Mary's Kirk with gold, Cristal Nixon would mind it no more than so many chucky-stones."

I would have persisted, were it but in hopes of his letting drop that which it concerned me to know, but he cut off further communication, by desiring me to lean back in the corner and go to sleep.

"Thou art cock-brained enough already," he added, "and we shall have thy young pate addled entirely, if you do not take some natural rest."

I did indeed require repose, if not slumber; the draught which I had taken continued to operate, and satisfied in my own mind that no attempt on my life was designed, the fear of instant death no longer combated the torpor which crept over me—I slept, and slept soundly, but still without refreshment.

When I awoke, I found myself extremely indisposed; images of the past, and anticipations of the future, floated confusedly through my brain. I perceived, however, that my situation was changed, greatly for the better. I was in a good bed, with the curtains drawn round it; I heard the lowered voice, and cautious step of attendants, who seemed to respect my repose; it appeared as if I was in the hands either of friends, or of such as meant me no personal harm.

I can give but an indistinct account of two or three broken and feverish days which succeeded, but if they were chequered with dreams and visions of terror, other and more agreeable objects were also sometimes pre-

sented. Alan Fairford will understand me when I say, I am convinced I saw G. M. during this interval of oblivion. I had medical attendance, and was bled more than once. I also remember a painful operation performed on my head, where I had received a severe blow on the night of the riot. My hair was cut short, and the bone of the skull examined, to discover if the cranium had received any injury.

On seeing the physician, it would have been natural to have appealed to him on the subject of my confinement, and I remember more than once attempting to do so. But the fever lay like a spell upon my tongue, and when I would have implored the doctor's assistance, I rambled from the subject, and spoke I know not what nonsense. Some power, which I was unable to resist, seemed to impel me into a different course of conversation from what I intended, and though conscious, in some degree, of the failure, I could not mend it; and resolved, therefore, to be patient, until my capacity of steady thought and expression was restored to me with my ordinary health, which had sustained a severe shock from the vicissitudes to which I had been exposed.*

* Note E. Riotous attack upon the Dam dike of Sir James Graham of Netherby.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

DARSIE LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

Two or three days, perhaps more, perhaps less, had been spent in bed, where I was carefully attended, and treated, I believe, with as much judgment as the case required, and I was at length allowed to quit my bed, though not the chamber. I was now more able to make some observation on the place of my confinement.

The room, in appearance and furniture, resembled the best apartment in a farmer's house; and the window, two storeys high, looked into a back-yard, or court, filled with domestic poultry. There were the usual domestic offices about this yard. I could distinguish the brewhouse and the barn, and I heard, from a more remote building, the lowing of the cattle, and other rural sounds, announcing a large and well-stocked farm. These were sights and sounds qualified to dispel any apprehension of immediate violence. Yet the building seemed ancient and strong, a part of the roof was battlemented, and the walls were of great thickness; lastly, I observed, with some unpleasant sensations, that the windows of my chamber had been lately secured with iron stanchions, and that the servants who brought me victuals, or visited my apartment to render

other menial offices, always locked the door when they retired.

The comfort and cleanliness of my chamber were of true English growth, and such as I had rarely seen on the other side of the Tweed; the very old wainscot, which composed the floor and the panelling of the room, was scrubbed with a degree of labour which the Scottish housewife rarely bestows on her most costly furniture.

The whole apartments appropriated to my use consisted of the bedroom, a small parlour adjacent, within which was a still smaller closet, having a narrow window, which seemed anciently to have been used as a shot-hole, admitting, indeed, a very moderate portion of light and air, but without its being possible to see anything from it except the blue sky, and that only by mounting on a chair. There were appearances of a separate entrance into this cabinet, besides that which communicated with the parlour, but it had been recently built up, as I discovered, by removing a piece of tapestry which covered the fresh mason-work. I found some of my clothes here, with linen and other articles, as well as my writing-case, containing pen, ink, and paper, which enables me, at my leisure (which, God knows, is undisturbed enough), to make this record of my confinement. It may be well believed, however, that I do not trust to the security of the bureau, but carry the written sheets about my person, so that I can only be deprived of them by actual violence. I also am cautious to write in the little cabinet only, so that I can hear any person approach me through the other

apartments, and have time enough to put aside my journal before they come upon me.

The servants, a stout country-fellow, and a very pretty milkmaid-looking lass, by whom I am attended, seem of the true Joan and Hodge school, thinking of little, and desiring nothing, beyond the very limited sphere of their own duties or enjoyments, and having no curiosity whatever about the affairs of others. Their behaviour to me in particular, is, at the same time, very kind and very provoking. My table is abundantly supplied, and they seem anxious to comply with my taste in that department. But whenever I make inquiries beyond "what's for dinner," the brute of a lad baffles me by his *anan*, and his *dunna knaw*, and if hard pressed, turns his back on me composedly, and leaves the room. The girl, too, pretends to be as simple as he; but an arch grin which she cannot always suppress, seems to acknowledge that she understands perfectly well the game which she is playing, and is determined to keep me in ignorance. Both of them, and the wench in particular, treat me as they would do a spoiled child, and never directly refuse me anything which I ask, taking care, at the same time, not to make their words good by effectually granting my request. Thus, if I desire to go out, I am promised by Dorcas that I shall walk in the park at night and see the cows milked, just as she would propose such an amusement to a child. But she takes care never to keep her word, if it is in her power to do so.

In the meantime, there has stolen on me insensibly

an indifference to my freedom—a carelessness about my situation, for which I am unable to account, unless it be the consequence of weakness and loss of blood. I have read of men who, immured as I am, have surprised the world by the address with which they have successfully overcome the most formidable obstacles to their escape; and when I have heard such anecdotes, I have said to myself, that no one who is possessed only of a fragment of freestone, or a rusty nail, to grind down rivets and to pick locks, having his full leisure to employ in the task, need continue the inhabitant of a prison. Here, however, I sit, day after day, without a single effort to effect my liberation.

Yet my inactivity is not the result of despondency, but arises, in part at least, from feelings of a very different cast. My story, long a mysterious one, seems now upon the verge of some strange development; and I feel a solemn impression that I ought to wait the course of events, to struggle against which is opposing my feeble efforts to the high will of fate. Thou, my Alan, will treat as timidity this passive acquiescence, which has sunk down on me like a benumbing torpor; but if thou hast remembered by what visions my couch was haunted, and dost but think of the probability that I am in the vicinity, perhaps under the same roof with G. M., thou wilt acknowledge that other feelings than pusillanimity have tended in some degree to reconcile me to my fate.

Still I own it is unmanly to submit with patience to this oppressive confinement. My heart rises against it,

especially when I sit down to record my sufferings in this Journal; and I am determined, as the first step to my deliverance, to have my letters sent to the post-house.

I am disappointed. When the girl Dorcas, upon whom I had fixed for a messenger, heard me talk of sending a letter, she willingly offered her services, and received the crown which I gave her (for my purse had not taken flight with the more valuable contents of my pocket-book), with a smile which shewed her whole set of white teeth.

But when, with the purpose of gaining some intelligence respecting my present place of abode, I asked, to which post-town she was to send or carry the letter, a stolid "*Anan*" shewed me she was either ignorant of the nature of a post-office, or that, for the present, she chose to seem so.—"Simpleton!" I said, with some sharpness.

"O Lord, sir!" answered the girl, turning pale, which they always do when I shew any sparks of anger, —"Don't put yourself in a passion—I'll put the letter in the post."

"What! and not know the name of the post-town?" said I, out of patience. "How on earth do you propose to manage that?"

"La you there, good master. What need you frighten a poor girl that is no schollard, bating what she learned at the Charity-School of Saint Bees?"

"Is Saint Bees far from this place, Dorcas?—Do you send your letters there?" said I, in a manner as insinuating, and yet careless, as I could assume.

"Saint Bees!—La, who but a madman—begging your honour's pardon—it's a matter of twenty years since fader lived at Saint Bees, which is twenty, or forty, or I dunna know not how many miles from this part, to the West, on the coast-side; and I would not have left Saint Bees, but that fader——"

"Oh, the devil take your father!" replied I.

To which she answered, "Nay, but thof your honour be a little how-come-so, you shouldn't damn folk's faders; and I won't stand to it, for one."

"Oh, I beg you a thousand pardons—I wish your father no ill in the world—he was a very honest man in his way."

"*Was* an honest man!" she exclaimed; for the Cumbrians are, it would seem, like their neighbours the Scotch, ticklish on the point of ancestry,—"He *is* a very honest man as ever led nag with halter on head, to Staneshaw-Bank Fair—Honest!—He is a horse-couper."

"Right, right," I replied; "I know it—I have heard of your father—as honest as any horse-couper of them all. Why, Dorcas, I mean to buy a horse of him."

"Ah, your honour," sighed Dorcas, "he is the man to serve your honour well—if ever you should get round again—or, thof you were a bit off the hooks, he would no more cheat you than——"

"Well, well, we will deal, my girl, you may depend on't. But tell me now, were I to give you a letter, what would you do to get it forward?"

"Why, put it into Squire's own bag that hangs in hall," answered poor Dorcas. "What else could I do? He sends it to Brampton, or to Carloisle, or where it pleases him, once a-week, and that gate."

"Ah!" said I; "and I suppose your sweetheart John carries it?"

"Noa—disn't now—and Jan is no sweetheart of mine, ever since he danced at his mother's feast with Kitty Rutlege, and let me sit still; that a did."

"It was most abominable in Jan, and what I could never have thought of him," I replied.

"O, but a did though—a let me sit still on my seat, a did."

"Well, well, my pretty May, you will get a handsomer fellow than Jan—Jan's not the fellow for you, I see that."

"Noa, noa," answered the damsel; "but he is weel aneugh for a' that, mon. But I carena a button for him; for there is the miller's son, that suitored me last Appleby Fair, when I went wi' oncle, is a gway canny lad as you will see in the sunshine."

"Ay, a fine stout fellow—Do you think he would carry my letter to Carlisle?"

"To Carloisle! 'Twould be all his life is worth; he maun wait on clap and hopper, as they say. Odd, his father would brain him if he went to Carloisle, bating to wrestling for the belt, or sic loike. But I ha' more

bachelors than him; there is the schoolmaster, can write almaist as weel as tou canst, mon."

"Then he is the very man to take charge of a letter; he knows the trouble of writing one."

"Ay, marry does he, an tou comest to that, mon; only it takes him four hours to write as mony lines. Tan, it is a great round hand loike, that one can read easily, and not loike your honour's, that are like midge's taes. But for ganging to Carloisle, he's dead foundered, man, as cripple as Eckie's mear."

"In the name of God," said I, "how is it that you propose to get my letter to the post?"

"Why, just to put it into Squire's bag loike," reiterated Dorcas; "he sends it by Cristal Nixon to post, as you call it, when such is his pleasure."

Here I was then, not much edified by having obtained a list of Dorcass bachelor's; and by finding myself with respect to any information which I desired, just exactly at the point where I set out. It was of consequence to me, however, to accustom the girl to converse with me familiarly. If she did so, she could not always be on her guard, and something, I thought, might drop from her which I could turn to advantage.

"Does not the Squire usually look into his letter-bag, Dorcas?" said I, with as much indifference as I could assume.

"That a does," said Dorcas; "and a threw out a letter of mine to Raff Miller, because a said——"

"Well, well, I won't trouble him with mine," said

I, "Dorcas; but, instead, I will write to himself, Dorcas. But how shall I address him?"

"Anan?" was again Dorcas's resource.

"I mean how is he called?—What is his name?"

"Sure your honour should know best," said Dorcas.

"I know?—The devil!—You drive me beyond patience."

"Noa, noa! donna your honour go beyond patience —donna ye now," implored the wench. "And for his neame, they say he has mair nor ane in Westmoreland and on the Scottish side. But he is but seldom wi' us, excepting in the cocking season; and then we just call him Squoire loike; and so do my measter and dame."

"And is he here at present?" said I.

"Not he, not he; he is a buck-hoonting, as they tell me, somewhere up the Patterdale way; but he comes and gangs like a flap of a whirlwind, or sic loike."

I broke off the conversation, after forcing on Dorcas a little silver to buy ribbons, with which she was so much delighted, that she exclaimed, "God! Cristal Nixon may say his worst on thee; but thou art a civil gentleman for all him; and a quoit man wi' woman folk loike."

There is no sense in being too quiet with women folk, so I added a kiss with my crown piece; and I cannot help thinking, that I have secured a partizan in Dorcas. At least she blushed, and pocketed her little compliment with one hand while, with the other, she adjusted her cherry-coloured ribbons, a little disordered

by the struggle it cost me to attain the honour of a salute.

As she unlocked the door to leave the apartment, she turned back, and looking on me with a strong expression of compassion, added the remarkable words, "La—be'st mad or no, thou'se a mettled lad, after all."

There was something very ominous in the sound of these farewell words, which seemed to afford me a clew to the pretext under which I was detained in confinement. My demeanour was probably insane enough, while I was agitated at once by the frenzy incident to the fever, and the anxiety arising from my extraordinary situation. But is it possible they can now establish any cause for confining me, arising out of the state of my mind?

If this be really the pretext under which I am restrained from my liberty, nothing but the sedate correctness of my conduct can remove the prejudices which these circumstances may have excited in the minds of all who have approached me during my illness. I have heard—dreadful thought!—of men who, for various reasons, have been trepanned into the custody of the keepers of private madhouses, and whose brain, after years of misery, became at length unsettled, through irresistible sympathy with the wretched beings among whom they were classed. This shall not be my case, if, by strong internal resolution, it is in human nature to avoid the action of exterior and contagious sympathies.

Meantime I sat down to compose and arrange my

thoughts, for my purposed appeal to my jailer—so I must call him—whom I addressed in the following manner, having at length, and after making several copies, found language to qualify the sense of resentment which burned in the first draughts of my letter, and endeavoured to assume a tone more conciliating. I mentioned the two occasions on which he had certainly saved my life, when at the utmost peril; and I added, that whatever was the purpose of the restraint now practised on me, as I was given to understand, by his authority, it could not certainly be with any view to ultimately injuring me. He might, I said, have mistaken me for some other person; and I gave him what account I could of my situation and education, to correct such an error. I supposed it next possible, that he might think me too weak for travelling, and not capable of taking care of myself; and I begged to assure him, that I was restored to perfect health, and quite able to endure the fatigue of a journey. Lastly, I reminded him, in firm though measured terms, that the restraint which I sustained was an illegal one, and highly punishable by the laws which protect the liberties of the subject. I ended by demanding, that he would take me before a magistrate; or, at least, that he would favour me with a personal interview, and explain his meaning with regard to me.

Perhaps this letter was expressed in a tone too humble for the situation of an injured man, and I am inclined to think so when I again recapitulate its tenor. But what could I do? I was in the power of one whose

passions seem as violent as his means of gratifying them appear unbounded. I had reason, too, to believe [this to thee, Alan] that all his family did not approve of the violence of his conduct towards me; my object, in fine, was freedom, and who would not sacrifice much to attain it?

I had no means of addressing my letter excepting, "For the Squire's own hand." He could be at no great distance, for in the course of twenty-four hours I received an answer. It was addressed to Darsie Latimer, and contained these words:—"You have demanded an interview with me. You have required to be carried before a magistrate. Your first wish shall be granted—perhaps the second also. Meanwhile, be assured that you are a prisoner for the time, by competent authority, and that such authority is supported by adequate power. Beware, therefore, of struggling with a force sufficient to crush you, but abandon yourself to that train of events by which we are both swept along, and which it is impossible that either of us can resist."

These mysterious words were without signature of any kind, and left me nothing more important to do than to prepare myself for the meeting which they promised. For that purpose I must now break off, and make sure of the manuscript,—so far as I can, in my present condition, be sure of any thing,—by concealing it within the lining of my coat, so as not to be found without strict search.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

LATIMER'S JOURNAL, IN CONTINUATION.

THE important interview expected at the conclusion of my last took place sooner than I had calculated; for the very day I received the letter, and just when my dinner was finished, the Squire, or whatever he is called, entered the room so suddenly, that I almost thought I beheld an apparition. The figure of this man is peculiarly noble and stately, and his voice has that deep fulness of accent which implies unresisted authority. I had risen involuntarily as he entered; we gazed on each other for a moment in silence, which was at length broken by my visiter.

"You have desired to see me," he said. "I am here; if you have aught to say, let me hear it; my time is too brief to be consumed in childish dumb-show."

"I would ask of you," said I, "by what authority I am detained in this place of confinement, and for what purpose?"

"I have told you already," said he, "that my authority is sufficient, and my power equal to it; this is all which it is necessary for you at present to know."

"Every British subject has a right to know why he

suffers restraint," I replied; "nor can he be deprived of liberty without a legal warrant.—Shew me that by which you confine me thus."

"You shall see more," he said; "you shall see the magistrate by whom it is granted, and that without a moment's delay."

This sudden proposal fluttered and alarmed me; I felt, nevertheless, that I had the right cause, and resolved to plead it boldly, although I could well have desired a little further time for preparation. He turned, however, threw open the door of the apartment, and commanded me to follow him. I felt some inclination, when I crossed the threshold of my prison-chamber, to have turned and run for it; but I knew not where to find the stairs—had reason to think the outer-doors would be secured—and, to conclude, so soon as I had quitted the room to follow the proud step of my conductor, I observed that I was dogged by Cristal Nixon, who suddenly appeared within two paces of me, and with whose great personal strength, independent of the assistance he might have received from his master, I saw no chance of contending. I therefore followed, unresistingly, and in silence, along one or two passages of much greater length than consisted with the ideas I had previously entertained of the size of the house. At length a door was flung open, and we entered a large, old-fashioned parlour, having coloured glass in the windows, oaken panelling on the wall, a huge grate, in which a large fagot or two smoked under an arched chimneypiece of stone, which bore some armorial device,

whilst the walls were adorned with the usual number of heroes in armour, with large wigs instead of helmets, and ladies in sacques, smelling to nosegays.

Behind a long table, on which were several books, sat a smart underbred-looking man, wearing his own hair tied in a club, and who, from the quire of paper laid before him, and the pen which he handled at my entrance, seemed prepared to officiate as clerk. As I wish to describe these persons as accurately as possible, I may add, he wore a dark-coloured coat, corduroy breeches, and spatterdashes. At the upper end of the same table, in an ample easy-chair, covered with black leather, reposed a fat personage, about fifty years old, who either was actually a country-justice, or was well selected to represent such a character. His leathern breeches were faultless in make, his jockey boots spotless in the varnish, and a handsome and flourishing pair of boot-garters, as they are called, united the one part of his garments to the other; in fine, a richly-laced scarlet waistcoat, and a purple coat, set off the neat though corpulent figure of the little man, and threw an additional bloom upon his plethoric aspect. I suppose he had dined, for it was two hours past noon, and he was amusing himself, and aiding digestion, with a pipe of tobacco. There was an air of importance in his manner which corresponded to the rural dignity of his exterior, and a habit which he had of throwing out a number of interjectional sounds, uttered with a strange variety of intonation, running from bass up to treble in a very extraordinary manner, or breaking off his sentences

with a whiff of his pipe, seemed adopted to give an air of thought and mature deliberation to his opinions and decisions. Notwithstanding all this, Alan, it might be *dooted*, as our old Professor used to say, whether the Justice was any thing more than an ass. Certainly, besides a great deference for the legal opinion of his clerk, which might be quite according to the order of things, he seemed to be wonderfully under the command of his brother Squire, if squire either of them were, and indeed much more than was consistent with so much assumed consequence of his own.

"Ho—ha—ay—so—so—Hum—humph—this is the young man, I suppose—Hum—ay—seems sickly—Young gentleman, you may sit down."

I used the permission given, for I had been much more reduced by my illness than I was aware of, and felt myself really fatigued, even by the few paces I had walked, joined to the agitation I suffered.

"And your name, young man, is—humph—ay—ha—what is it?"

"Darsie Latimer."

"Right—ay—humph—very right. Darsie Latimer is the very thing—ha—ay—where do you come from?"

"From Scotland, sir," I replied.

"A native of Scotland—a—humph—eh—how is it?"

"I am an Englishman by birth, sir."

"Right—ay—yes, you are so. But pray, Mr. Darsie Latimer, have you always been called by that

name, or have you any other?—Nick, write down his answers, Nick."

"As far as I remember, I never bore any other," was my answer.

"How, no?—well, I should not have thought so—Hey, neighbour, would you?"

Here he looked towards the other Squire, who had thrown himself into a chair; and, with his legs stretched out before him, and his arms folded on his bosom, seemed carelessly attending to what was going forward. He answered the appeal of the Justice by saying, that perhaps the young man's memory did not go back to a very early period.

"Ah—eh—ha—you hear the gentleman—Pray, how far may your memory be pleased to run back to? —umph?"

"Perhaps, sir, to the age of three years, or a little farther."

"And will you presume to say, sir," said the Squire, drawing himself suddenly erect in his seat, and exerting the strength of his powerful voice, "that you *then* bore your present name?"

I was startled at the confidence with which this question was put, and in vain rummaged my memory for the means of replying. "At least," I said, "I always remember being called Darsie; children, at that early age, seldom get more than their Christian name."

"O, I thought so," he replied, and again stretched himself on his seat, in the same lounging posture as before.

"So you were called Darsie in your infancy," said the Justice; "and—hum—ay—when did you first take the name of Latimer?"

"I did not take it, sir; it was given to me."

"I ask you," said the Lord of the mansion, but with less severity in his voice than formerly, "whether you can remember that you were ever called Latimer, until you had that name given you in Scotland?"

"I will be candid: I cannot recollect an instance that I was so called when in England, but neither can I recollect when the name was first given me; and if any thing is to be founded on these queries and my answers, I desire my early childhood may be taken into consideration."

"Hum—ay—yes," said the Justice; "all that requires consideration shall be duly considered. Young man—eh—I beg to know the name of your father and mother?"

This was galling a wound that had festered for years, and I did not endure the question so patiently as those which preceded it; but replied, "I demand, in my turn, to know if I am before an English Justice of the Peace?"

"His worship Squire Foxley, of Foxley Hall, has been of the quorum these twenty years," said Master Nicholas.

"Then he ought to know, or you, sir, as his clerk, should inform him," said I, "that I am the complainer in this case, and that my complaint ought to be heard before I am subjected to cross-examination."

"Humph — hoy — what, ay — there is something in that, neighbour," said the poor Justice, who, blown about by every wind of doctrine, seemed desirous to attain the sanction of his brother Squire.

"I wonder at you, Foxley," said his firm-minded acquaintance; "how can you render the young man justice unless you know who he is?"

"Ha — yes — egad that's true," said Mr. Justice Foxley; "and now — looking into the matter more closely — there is, eh, upon the whole — nothing at all in what he says — so, sir, you must tell your father's name and surname."

"It is out of my power, sir; they are not known to me, since you must needs know so much of my private affairs."

The Justice collected a great *afflatus* in his cheeks, which puffed them up like those of a Dutch cherub, while his eyes seemed flying out of his head, from the effort with which he retained his breath. He then blew it forth with,—"Whew!—Hoom—poof—ha!—not know your parents, youngster?—Then I must commit you for a vagrant, I warrant you. *Omne ignotum pro terribili*, as we used to say at Appleby school; that is, every one that is not known to the Justice, is a rogue and a vagabond. Ha!—ay, you may sneer, sir; but I question if you would have known the meaning of that Latin, unless I had told you."

I acknowledged myself obliged for a new edition of the adage, and an interpretation which I could never have reached alone and unassisted. I then proceeded

to state my case with greater confidence. The Justice was an ass, that was clear; but it was scarcely possible he could be so utterly ignorant as not to know what was necessary in so plain a case as mine. I therefore informed him of the riot which had been committed on the Scottish side of the Solway Firth; explained how I came to be placed in my present situation; and requested of his worship to set me at liberty. I pleaded my cause with as much earnestness as I could, casting an eye from time to time upon the opposite party, who seemed entirely indifferent to all the animation with which I accused him.

As for the Justice, when at length I had ceased, as really not knowing what more to say in a case so very plain, he replied, "Ho—ay—ay—yes—wonderful! and so this is all the gratitude you shew to this good gentleman for the great charge and trouble he hath had with respect to and concerning of you?"

"He saved my life, sir, I acknowledge, on one occasion certainly, and most probably on two; but his having done so gives him no right over my person. I am not, however, asking for any punishment or revenge; on the contrary, I am content to part friends with the gentleman, whose motives I am unwilling to suppose are bad, though his actions have been, towards me, unauthorized and violent."

This moderation, Alan, thou wilt comprehend, was not entirely dictated by my feelings towards the individual of whom I complained; there were other reasons, in which regard for him had little share. It seemed,

however, as if the mildness with which I pleaded my cause had more effect upon him than anything I had yet said. He was moved to the point of being almost out of countenance; and took snuff repeatedly, as if to gain time to stifle some degree of emotion.

But on Justice Foxley, on whom my eloquence was particularly designed to make impression, the result was much less favourable. He consulted in a whisper with Mr. Nicholas, his clerk—pshawed, hemmed, and elevated his eyebrows, as if in scorn of my supplication. At length, having apparently made up his mind, he leaned back in his chair, and smoked his pipe with great energy, with a look of defiance, designed to make me aware that all my reasoning was lost on him.

At length, when I stopped, more from lack of breath than want of argument, he opened his oracular jaws, and made the following reply, interrupted by his usual interjectional ejaculations, and by long volumes of smoke:—"Hem—ay—eh—poof—And, youngster, do you think Matthew Foxley, who has been one of the quorum for these twenty years, is to be come over with such trash as would hardly cheat an apple-woman?—Poof—poof—eh! Why, man—eh—dost thou not know the charge is not a bailable matter—and that—hum—ay—the greatest man—poof—the Baron of Graystock himself, must stand committed? and yet you pretend to have been kidnapped by this gentleman, and robbed of property, and what not; and—eh—poof—you would persuade me all you want is to get away from him?—I do believe—eh—that it *is* all you want.

Therefore, as you are a sort of a slip-string gentleman, and—ay—hum—a kind of idle apprentice, and something cock-brained withal, as the honest folks of the house tell me—why, you must e'en remain under custody of your guardian, till your coming of age, or my Lord Chancellor's warrant, shall give you the management of your own affairs, which, if you can gather your brains again, you will even then not be—ay—hem—poof—in particular haste to assume."

The time occupied by his worship's hums, and haws, and puffs of tobacco smoke, together with the slow and pompous manner in which he spoke, gave me a minute's space to collect my ideas, dispersed as they were by the extraordinary purport of this annunciation.

"I cannot conceive, sir," I replied, "by what singular tenure this person claims my obedience as a guardian; it is a barefaced imposture—I never in my life saw him, until I came unhappily to this country, about four weeks since."

"Ay, sir—we—eh—know, and are aware—that—poof—you do not like to hear some folk's names; and that—eh—you understand me—there are things, and sounds, and matters, conversation about names, and such like, which put you off the hooks—which I have no humour to witness. Nevertheless, Mr. Darsie—or—poof—Mr. Darsie Latimer—or—poof, poof—eh—ay, Mr. Darsie without the Latimer—you have acknowledged as much to-day as assures me you will best be disposed of under the honourable care of my friend here—all your confessions—besides that—poof—eh—

I know him to be a most responsible person—a—hay—ay—most responsible and honourable person—Can you deny this?"

"I know nothing of him," I repeated; "not even his name; and I have not, as I told you, seen him in the course of my whole life, till a few weeks since."

"Will you swear to that?" said the singular man, who seemed to await the result of this debate, secure as a rattlesnake is of the prey which has once felt its fascination. And while he said these words in deep under-tone, he withdrew his chair a little behind that of the Justice, so as to be unseen by him or his clerk, who sat upon the same side; while he bent on me a frown so portentous, that no one who has witnessed the look can forget it during the whole of his life. The furrows of the brow above the eyes became livid and almost black, and were bent into a semicircular, or rather elliptical form, above the junction of the eyebrows. I had heard such a look described in an old tale of *diablerie*, which it was my chance to be entertained with not long since; when this deep and gloomy contortion of the frontal muscles was not unaptly described, as forming the representation of a small horseshoe.

The tale, when told, awaked a dreadful vision of infancy, which the withering and blighting look now fixed on me again forced on my recollection, but with much more vivacity. Indeed I was so much surprised, and, I must add terrified, at the vague ideas which were awakened in my mind by this fearful sign, that I kept

my eyes fixed on the face in which it was exhibited, as on a frightful vision; until, passing his handkerchief a moment across his countenance, this mysterious man relaxed at once the look which had for me something so appalling. "The young man will no longer deny that he has seen me before," said he to the Justice, in a tone of complacency; "and I trust he will now be reconciled to my temporary guardianship, which may end better for him than he expects."

"Whatever I expect," I replied, summoning my scattered recollections together, "I see I am neither to expect justice nor protection from this gentleman, whose office it is to render both to the lieges. For you, sir, how strangely you have wrought yourself into the fate of an unhappy young man, or what interest you can pretend in me, you yourself only can explain. That I have seen you before, is certain; for none can forget the look with which you seem to have the power of blighting those upon whom you cast it."

The Justice seemed not very easy under this hint. "Ha!—ay," he said; "it is time to be going, neighbour. I have a many miles to ride, and I care not to ride darkling in these parts.—You and I, Mr. Nicholas, must be jogging."

The Justice fumbled with his gloves, in endeavouring to draw them on hastily, and Mr. Nicholas bustled to get his great-coat and whip. Their landlord endeavoured to detain them, and spoke of supper and beds. Both pouring forth many thanks for his invitation, seemed as if they would much rather not; and Mr.

Justice Foxley was making a score of apologies, with at least a hundred cautionary hems and eh-ehs, when the girl Dorcas burst into the room, and announced a gentleman on justice business.

"What gentleman?—and whom does he want?"

"He is cuome post on his ten toes," said the wench; "and on justice business to his worship loike. I'se uphald him a gentleman, for he speaks as good Latin as the schulemeaster; but, lack-a-day! he has gotten a queer mop of a wig."

The gentleman, thus announced and described, bounced into the room. But I have already written as much as fills a sheet of my paper, and my singular embarrassments press so hard on me, that I have matter to fill another from what followed the intrusion of—my dear Alan—your crazy client—Poor Peter Peebles!

NOTES TO VOLUME XXXV.

NOTE A, p. 141.

In explanation of this circumstance, I cannot help adding a note not very necessary for the reader, which yet I record with pleasure, from recollection of the kindness which it evinces. In early youth I resided for a considerable time in the vicinity of the beautiful village of Kelso, where my life passed in a very solitary manner. I had few acquaintances, scarce any companions, and books, which were at the time almost essential to my happiness, were difficult to come by. It was then that I was particularly indebted to the liberality and friendship of an old lady of the Society of Friends, eminent for her benevolence and charity. Her deceased husband had been a medical man of eminence, and left her, with other valuable property, a small and well-selected library. This the kind old lady permitted me to rummage at pleasure, and carry home what volumes I chose, on condition that I should take, at the same time, some of the tracts printed for encouraging and extending the doctrines of her own sect. She did not even exact any promise that I would read these performances, being too justly afraid of involving me in a breach of promise, but was merely desirous that I should have the chance of instruction within my reach, in case whim, curiosity, or accident, might induce me to have recourse to it.

NOTE B, p. 207.

The personages here mentioned are most of them characters of historical fame; but those less known and remembered may

be found in the tract entitled, "The Judgment and Justice of God Exemplified, or, a Brief Historical Account of some of the Wicked Lives and Miserable Deaths of some of the most remarkable Apostates and Bloody Persecutors, from the Reformation till after the Revolution." This constitutes a sort of postscript or appendix to John Howie of Lochgoin's "Account of the Lives of the most eminent Scots Worthies." The author has, with considerable ingenuity, reversed his reasoning upon the inference to be drawn from the prosperity or misfortunes which befall individuals in this world, either in the course of their lives or in the hour of death. In the account of the martyrs' sufferings, such inflictions are mentioned only as trials permitted by Providence, for the better and brighter display of their faith, and constancy of principle. But when similar afflictions befell the opposite party, they are imputed to the direct vengeance of Heaven upon their impiety. If, indeed, the life of any person obnoxious to the historian's censures happened to have passed in unusual prosperity, the mere fact of its being finally concluded by death, is assumed as an undeniable token of the judgment of Heaven, and, to render the conclusion inevitable, his last scene is generally garnished with some singular circumstances. Thus, the Duke of Lauderdale is said, through old age but immense corpulence, to have become so sunk in spirits, "that his heart was not the bigness of a walnut."

NOTE C, p. 215.

I have heard in my youth some such wild tale as that placed in the mouth of the blind fiddler, of which, I think the hero was Sir Robert Grierson of Lagg, the famous persecutor. But the belief was general throughout Scotland, that the excessive lamentation over the loss of friends disturbed the repose of the dead, and broke even the rest of the grave. There are several instances of this in tradition, but one struck me particularly, as I heard it from the lips of one who professed receiving it from those of a ghost-seer. This was a Highland lady, named Mrs. C—— of D——, who probably believed firmly in the truth of an apparition, which seems to have originated in the weakness of

her nerves and strength of her imagination. She had been lately left a widow by her husband, with the office of guardian to their only child. The young man added to the difficulties of his charge by an extreme propensity for a military life, which his mother was unwilling to give way to, while she found it impossible to repress it. About this time the Independent Companies, formed for the preservation of the peace of the Highlands, were in the course of being levied; and as a gentleman named Cameron, nearly connected with Mrs. C——, commanded one of those companies, she was at length persuaded to compromise the matter with her son, by permitting him to enter this company in the capacity of a cadet, thus gratifying his love of a military life without the dangers of foreign service, to which no one then thought these troops were at all liable to be exposed, while even their active service at home was not likely to be attended with much danger. She readily obtained a promise from her relative that he would be particular in his attention to her son, and therefore concluded she had accommodated matters between her son's wishes and his safety in a way sufficiently attentive to both. She set off to Edinburgh to get what was awanting for his outfit, and shortly afterwards received melancholy news from the Highlands. The Independent Company into which her son was to enter had a skirmish with a party of catherans engaged in some act of spoil, and her friend the Captain being wounded, and out of the reach of medical assistance, died in consequence. This news was a thunderbolt to the poor mother, who was at once deprived of her kinsman's advice and assistance, and instructed by his fate of the unexpected danger to which her son's new calling exposed him. She remained also in great sorrow for her relative, whom she loved with sisterly affection. These conflicting causes of anxiety, together with her uncertainty whether to continue or change her son's destination, were terminated in the following manner:—

The house in which Mrs. C—— resided in the old town of Edinburgh, was a flat or storey of a land accessible, as was then universal, by a common stair. The family who occupied the storey beneath were her acquaintances, and she was in the habit of drinking tea with them every evening. It was accordingly about six o'clock, when, recovering herself from a deep fit of

anxious reflection, she was about to leave the parlour in which she sat in order to attend this engagement. The door through which she was to pass opened, as was very common in Edinburgh, into a dark passage. In this passage, and within a yard of her when she opened the door, stood the apparition of her kinsman, the deceased officer, in his full tartans, and wearing his bonnet. Terrified at what she saw, or thought she saw, she closed the door hastily, and, sinking on her knees by a chair, prayed to be delivered from the horrors of the vision. She remained in that posture till her friends below tapped on the floor to intimate that tea was ready. Recalled to herself by the signal, she arose, and, on opening the apartment door, again was confronted by the visionary Highlander, whose bloody brow bore token, on this second appearance, to the death he had died. Unable to endure this repetition of her terrors, Mrs. C—— sunk on the floor in a swoon. Her friends below, startled with the noise, came up stairs, and, alarmed at the situation in which they found her, insisted on her going to bed and taking some medicine, in order to compose what they took for a nervous attack. They had no sooner left her in quiet than the apparition of the soldier was once more visible in the apartment. This time she took courage and said, "In the name of God, Donald, why do you haunt one who respected and loved you when living?" To which he answered readily, in Gaelic, "Cousin, why did you not speak sooner? My rest is disturbed by your unnecessary lamentation —your tears scald me in my shroud. I come to tell you that my untimely death ought to make no difference in your views for your son; God will raise patrons to supply my place, and he will live to the fulness of years, and die honoured and at peace." The lady of course followed her kinsman's advice; and as she was accounted a person of strict veracity, we may conclude the first apparition an illusion on the fancy, the final one a lively dream suggested by the other two.

Note D, p. 244. Peter Peebles.

This unfortunate litigant (for a person named Peter Peebles actually flourished) frequented the courts of justice in Scotland

about the year 1792, and the sketch of his appearance is given from recollection. The author is of opinion that he himself had at one time the honour to be counsel for Peter Peebles, whose voluminous course of litigation served as a sort of assay-pieces to most young men who were called to the bar. The scene of the consultation is entirely imaginary.

NOTE E, p. 331. RIOTOUS ATTACK UPON THE DAM-DIKE OF SIR JAMES GRAHAM OF NETHERBY.

It may be here mentioned, that a violent and popular attack upon what the country people of this district considered as an invasion of their fishing right, is by no means an improbable fiction. Shortly after the close of the American war, Sir James Graham of Netherby constructed a dam-dike, or cauld, across the Esk, at a place where it flowed through his estate, though it has its origin, and the principal part of its course, in Scotland. The new barrier at Netherby was considered as an encroachment calculated to prevent the salmon from ascending into Scotland; and the right of erecting it being an international question of law betwixt the sister kingdoms, there was no court in either competent to its decision. In this dilemma, the Scots people assembled in numbers by signal of rocket lights, and, rudely armed with fowling-pieces, fish spears, and such rustic weapons, marched to the banks of the river for the purpose of pulling down the dam-dike objected to. Sir James Graham armed many of his own people to protect his property, and had some military from Carlisle for the same purpose. A renewal of the Border wars had nearly taken place in the eighteenth century, when prudence and moderation on both sides saved much tumult, and perhaps some bloodshed. The English proprietor consented that a breach should be made in his dam-dike sufficient for the passage of the fish, and thus removed the Scottish grievance. I believe the river has since that time taken the matter into its own disposal, and entirely swept away the dam-dike in question.

END OF VOLUME THIRTY-FIFTH.